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The Week

WHERE are the American pacifists? Now, if ever, they ought to assert themselves. The United States, Great Britain and Japan are engaged in naval discussions in London that are clearly headed toward disaster. Japan is demanding an increase in her relative naval strength and says if she doesn't get it she will repudiate all treaties of naval limitation; everyone knows that she means what she says. The British are seeking desperately to work out a compromise of some sort that will continue the principle of limitation, bringing Japan somewhat nearer to security against a combined attack by the British and Americans in Japanese waters, while still making it utterly impossible for her to attack us across the Pacific. The United States, however, is adamant. Japan must continue with a fleet three-fifths as large as the British or our own, or we will start a building race. Surely, if ever a firm voice was needed in America on behalf of common sense and a continuation of the principle of limitation, it is now. Yet so far as we are aware, hardly a word has come from all those millions of American citizens who have repeatedly said that they are opposed to war and to everything that makes for the danger of war. Our admirals can argue with some show of reason that the country seems to be behind them. Unless more voices are raised in opposition to them, the world will believe they are right.

PRESIDENT Roosevelt's special Committee on Economic Security will make its report in the near future; and presumably the President will base on it his recommendations for new legislation to the Congress which meets the first week in January. The joint responsibility that rests on the Committee and on the President is very great; the Committee is supposedly composed of the best available experts, and the President's prestige with Congress is so high that his recommendations will probably be followed closely. It is safe to assume, however, that at least as regards unemployment insurance, the reactionary employers of the country will fight for proposals that put the least possible burden upon themselves, or for some plausible scheme that can be turned to their advantage in the struggle against labor, as pension plans have often been in the past. In Mr. Abraham Epstein's article appearing on page 37 of this issue, some of the difficulties in the way are described, and the alternative possibilities laid down. In other articles in our series on security for Americans, various plans will be described and discussed in more detail. At least one important principle is, we think, already clear: that it would be better to wait a few months longer, if necessary, and establish plans that will stand the test of time, than to rush something through Congress now and then spend twenty-five years trying to undo the harmful results.

AT LAST there is a gleam of hope for Tom Mooney. His attorneys have petitioned the United States Supreme Court for the right to file a petition for a writ of habeas corpus; and the Court, while it has not granted this right, has directed the warden of San Quentin prison, where Tom has been for eighteen years, to show cause within forty days why Mooney's attorneys should not be allowed to file the petition. Thus the slow machinery of justice

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begins to revolve again, with the prospect that at some time in the future the Court may be asked to consider whether due process of law was observed in California when Mooney was sentenced to death (his sentence was afterward commuted to life imprisonment) on trumped-up, perjured testimony, by a city government hand-in-glove with the reactionary employers of the community, anxious to get Mooney out of the way because of his labor-union activities. The legal situation is admittedly unusual; but so was the frame-up by which Mooney has been kept in prison for eighteen years in the face of strong evidence supporting his innocence.

THE report of Dickerson N. Hoover on the "Morro Castle" disaster is said to be in two sections, one public and the other confidential. If the rumors about the confidential report are correct, it is a pity they were not reversed; for the confidential report is believed to place the basic responsibility for the disaster on the low morale of the officers and crew that necessarily followed years of systematic underpay, overwork, poor food and lodging, lack of training and thorough mismanagement by the Ward Line. The public report, on the other hand, finds the cause of disaster in "man failure," which is hardly an original discovery; the question Mr. Hoover was sent to investigate was why the men failed. On the other hand, parts of Mr. Hoover's report are much to his credit. He frankly points out the inadequacy of the Steamboat Inspection Laws and the failure of the inspectors to enforce them, though here again there is the interesting and unanswered question of why the inspectors do not or cannot compel great steamship lines to spend money in keeping their ships and crews up to the law. He makes the further point that thorough revision is needed in the laws concerning salvage and limiting the liability of steamship companies for damages. Both are difficult and involved matters, but there is no reason why financial protection of passengers, which is a commonplace in land transportation, cannot be extended to the sea.

PARALLEL to the Hoover report, the testimony of Gus Brown, secretary of the Eastern and Gulf Sailors' Association, makes interesting reading. Appearing before the Dickstein subcommittee of the Congressional Committee on Merchant Marine, Mr. Brown gave a detailed description of the ways in which the steamship companies dodge the various seamen's laws. He said that the regulation requiring two-thirds of a crew to be American citizens was avoided by construing first papers as equivalent to citizenship if the holder had a three-year certificate, and that even this minor difficulty was smoothed over by maintaining an open market along the waterfront, where such certificates could be purchased. With almost unlimited freedom in hiring, the lines, he added, make a practice of building up rival unions among their crews and thus crippling the power of both. This is true at least of the Eastern and Gulf Association, which has shrunk from a membership of 100,000 to less than 22,000.

EVENTS of the recent past in Austria come as a sort of anticlimax to the conflict that raged for more than a year between the Austrian Nazis and the Christian Social governments. A deputation of ten National Socialists waited on Chancellor Schuschnigg, Vice Chancellor von Starhemberg and Colonel Walter, Minister of Propaganda, to pledge their organizations to the inviolable sovereignty of the Austrian state, to the repudiation of the former stand in favor of union with Germany and to recognition of the Fatherland Front as the sole political organ of the country. Having come to an agreement on fundamentals, technical questions of organization and other formalities will take care of themselves. But with this comes a turning point in the mutual relationship between these fascist brothers. The Nazis, having accepted the basic demands of the Schuschnigg government, the Christian-Social-Heimwehr coalition will now find itself in the unpleasant situation of having to take a stand on National Socialist demands, chief among them the Aryanization of Austria by a general ejection of all Jews and "half-castes" from the Fatherland Front, from all fascist government bodies and from all positions of importance in the Austrian press. The Chancellor, who only a short time ago on the one hand promised Jewish representatives complete equality and on the other countenanced the removal of Jewish physicians and other officials from municipal posts, will overcome this issue by compromise. After that it will be a question of personal power.

ON November 1, the new corporate state of Austria became a fact with the appointment of a state council of fifty, a cultural council of forty and an economic council of eighty, all of them chosen by the National Cabinet and announced by President Wilhelm Miklas as the official government of the Austrian corporate state. In the future, Dr. Schuschnigg proclaimed over the radio just before the appointments were announced, Austria's parliament will be elected through corporative guilds. The large majority of the 190 yes-men who will henceforth sanction the Cabinet's decrees are former members of the Christian Social Party; the minority are members of the Heimwehr organization. Between the two groups there have always been and still are deep-rooted differences which only two weeks ago found turbulent expression in bloody skirmishes between the Christian Social Sturmschaaren and the Heimwehr. This brotherhood will be of short duration. The granting of a minority representation in the corporate parliaments will merely whet the appetites of the National Socialists.

THE announcement comes of the award of the Nobel Prize to the Italian playwright, Luigi Pirandello. Few could object to this. Some years ago the Spanish Benavente received the same honor;

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and though there were some who considered his work too generalized and widely derivative for such an honor, it could be said, on the whole, that the author of such plays as "The Passion Flower" and "The Bonds of Interest" could certainly be a competitor among all living dramatists. The Pirandello merits have an interestingly different slant. His contribution to the theatre could not be called either generalized or imitated, so far as modern drama sources lie. He has made to dramatic technique a genuinely original contribution. We may take, for example, as two of his typical works, facile and profound, "Six Characters in Search of an Author" and "Henry IV." In them he has found a dramatic form, or pattern, for the philosophical ideas that absorb him in general, the theme of reality and unreality, fiction and fact, the two forces, one of which achieves the form that contains the idea and the other of which breaks it down. To the dance and tradition of the *commedia dell'arte* he has brought a new and absorbing abstraction; philosophic, modern and, through his genius, theatrical. He is short on esthetics, if you like, but long on a kind of brilliant monotony. In addition to his dramatic activities Pirandello has established himself in Italian prose literature, fiction especially, and has been one of the leaders in the theatrical organizations and impulses of modern Italy.

IN THE course of a libel suit at Berne, Switzerland, brought by the Union of Swiss Jewish Communities against the Swiss Nazis, we are at last getting what appears to be the authentic record of the Protocols of Zion. The Union of Jewish Communities has brought to the stand a long string of witnesses, some Jewish, but mostly Russians, officers or civil servants under the Tsar and the Kerensky government. From the archives of the Tsarist secret police, to which these men had access, comes the detailed trail of how the Protocols came into existence and what they were used for. It appears that at the height of the revolutionary troubles of 1905 General Rachowsky, an officer of the Russian Secret Police stationed at Paris, needed, either for himself or to sell to others, some powerful anti-Jewish material. At that time the Tsar was considering modifications of the Russian Constitution that would have freed the Jews from many disabilities. Rachowsky knew that powerful influences in Russia were opposed to this and would appreciate materials to aid in stopping it. The General found himself a Frenchman, Henri Bind, and a Russian agent provocateur, Golowinsky, who was besides something of a bibliophile. The two latter undertook the work of concocting the desired sort of material from obscure sources in the National Library at Paris.

SATISFIED with his product, Rachowsky sent it on to Russia, where it was discreetly distributed through secret-police channels, and then spread over the world, eventually reaching even Henry Ford. The Berne trial has also disclosed the obscure sources that Messrs. Bind and Golowinsky used in the National Library back in 1905. Page after page of the Protocols were shown by the court expert to be identical with a forgotten work "A Dialogue in Hades Between Machiavelli and Montesquieu," by Maurice Joly, published in 1864. The famous chapter in the Protocols on the meeting of the elders of Zion in the Jewish Cemetery in Prague turns out to be a chapter from another forgotten book, "Biarritz," by one Goedsche, who wrote under the name of Sir John Retcliff, and was an anti-Semite of mild note in his day. But even so we have probably not heard the last of the Protocols of Zion. It was not for their credibility that they were used, since they had none; nor will people anxious to believe such nonsense wish to investigate its authenticity.

GEORGIA is building herself a choice case in civil rights. She has arrested Alexander E. Rackolen, a New York attorney, Clarence Weaver, a Negro delegate to the last Congress Against War and Fascism, Mrs. R. W. Alling of Atlanta and Nathan Yagol, a young instructor and graduate student at Emory University, Atlanta. All are charged with "inciting to insurrection against the lawful authority." The crime appears to have been attending an informal current-events club meeting at Mrs. Alling's home at which discussion turned to the prevention of war. Through some oversight by the authorities Mrs. Alling's fourteen-year-old daughter, present at the meeting, was discharged at the arraignment. The evidence of insurrection consists of copies of The New Republic, The Nation, The New Masses, and the fact that Yagol is a member of the League for Industrial Democracy. The real "evidence" of the state seems to be that Mr. Rackolen was retained by the International Labor Defense to help in the Scottsboro case and had attempted to defend two pickets arrested in the recent textile strike. Another piece of "evidence" is the fact that Mrs. Alling, a white woman, had permitted Weaver, a Negro, to attend the private meeting in her home. To cap their crime, according to Chief of Police Parker, a copy of Liberty magazine was found on one of the defendants. Any magazine with the word "liberty" on it, must, the Chief explained, be communistic.

ONE election story, based on rumor for which we cannot vouch, is worth repeating. California interests opposed to Sinclair, so it alleges, approached an underworld character in New York, one of whose sources of income is supplying crooked voting machines. They offered him a large sum of money to ship a consignment to Los Angeles, to be substituted for the genuine variety. After pondering the offer, he declined. Sinclair, he said, was trying to abolish poverty, and he did not want to ruin his chances. That would be dirty politics.

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If the Elephant Dies

WITH ONLY four states left, with less than a third of the members of Congress, with no leader who captures popular imagination or is likely to do so, and with no coherent program, the Republican Party seems to be on its way to the cemetery. It is quite possible that the great depression of the thirties, coming after and during its unchallenged control of national affairs, will be so long associated with Republicanism that it cannot win power again for a generation. And that probably means never, for a party so long deprived of the emoluments of office in both nation and states will die for lack of mere nutrition.

It is becoming common to question whether, as The New Republic asked after November, 1932, the Republicans may not go the way of the Whigs. If so, what will be the line-up in national politics? How do parties die, anyhow? And is it conceivable that we should, like Communist Russia or Nazi Germany, have but one party?

History gives us a hint of the answers to these questions. Before the Whig Party disappeared, it lost popular following. Andrew Jackson and his farmer-labor coalition—which was the Democratic Party—captured the non-propertied whites of the South and many of the workers in Northern industries. Originally, two-thirds of the Southern slaveholders were Whigs, who thought no gentleman could be a Democrat. But when their political support swarmed away, they were soon forced to follow, uncomfortable as the migration was. They entered the Democratic Party, financed it, and before long controlled it. The name and avowed principles of a party mattered little so long as it could be used to support their economic interests.

The Whigs, deprived of Southern support for many years, could not win elections. They also faced a split in the North, on the slavery and homestead issues. Eventually their left wing was forced to combine with the Free Soilers under the name Republican, and the Whigs finally disappeared. The Republicans weaned away many Northern Jacksonian Democrats from what had now become the pro-slavery party, announcing their heritage of Jeffersonian principles.

No historical analogy can be exact, but it is easy to see a similarity to this political realignment in the present situation. The Republican Party has been the instrument of the dominant economic force of this period—business, chiefly big business and finance. But its popular adherence has at last, by a resurgence of discontent, been swept away. Under Smith the Democrats tried to consolidate business support, but Roosevelt has been the shrewder politician in enlisting his popular army first. The owning class will not be content to remain in a minority for the sake of a name and a tradition. It has too much at stake. If it believes the Republican Party to be doomed, it will woo and probably will win the Democratic organization. Indeed, it is already busily engaged in doing so. Even before the election the bankers made gestures of amity to Mr. Roosevelt. Business executives have been in close touch with the administration through the N.R.A., and have won the decision in many important issues. The President and leading members of his administration have lately been careful to express their belief in "the profit system," to conciliate business and convince it that the proposed reforms are merely moderate changes that will not hurt. Nothing is more likely than that after the flurry of the New Deal has died down, the Democratic Party will appear, not only as the leading power in national politics, but as the chief bulwark of capitalism against genuine change.

The second half of the formula for the disappearance of a party and a new alignment is also at work. Not only are the chief privileged interests in the Republican Party beginning to desert it, but it is weakened by a drift to the left. In Wisconsin the successful inauguration of the state Progressive Party has left the Republicans a poor third. In Minnesota the control of the Farmer-Laborites has been strengthened. In many Western states there is a sentiment among former Republican voters that will forbid their following long the lead of a complacent Democracy, just as they have already broken away from the musty Republicans. Even in the East, where the Roosevelt vote has grown stronger since 1932, there are signs of a trend to the left of the goal he seems to be seeking. The Progressives and Farmer-Laborites already have as strong a representation in Congress as the Free Soil Party had before the campaign of Frémont. If the Democrats now repeat their performance before the Civil War, and strengthen the hold upon the government of the dominant but moribund economic class, and if the Republican Party withers away, it is inconceivable that there will not arise a new opposition on the left, formed of the more radical cohorts of both old parties and influenced by the ideas of those who have been outlaws from both.

In saying this we assume, of course, that the issues of a capitalist world in decline will be as decisive and disturbing as those involved in the fall of the slave-holding aristocracy of the South and the rise of industry in the North during the first half of the nineteenth century. We assume that politics will be about something, not just a sporting issue between machines that really do not disagree. This is hardly a rash assumption, in view of the events of the past few years and the prospect for the near future. It is not necessary to assume, however, that the new party on the left will rally round a simple assertion of the necessity for a complete and sudden abolition of private property in the means of production. Before 1860 all parties, except militant minorities, tried to subordinate the slavery issue. Though many citizens believed slavery to be wrong, most of them, even in the North,

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shrank from the conflict involved in trying to abolish it where it existed. The Republicans themselves under Lincoln merely declared in favor of limiting it. Likewise the new progressives will doubtless attempt merely to deprive business and finance of dominant political power, to establish and maintain areas of socialism. Will capitalists, unlike the slave interests, bow gracefully to this clipping of their wings? Will they not see the beginning of the end, the moment a really convinced party on the left assumes power? That question remains for a more distant future. But it already seems likely that the party division will edge more closely to the leading issue of the present.

The Power Trust Convicted

THE REPORT of the New York Power Authority on the cost of local distribution of electricity, given out by President Roosevelt this week, is the most important technical document thus far issued in the struggle of the American people to obtain lower rates from the private companies.

The people learned last winter, when the Tennessee Valley Authority announced its standard rate schedules, how unbelievably low rates might be under a publicly owned and operated self-liquidating superpower system. The report of Chairman Frank P. Walsh not only sustains the soundness of Director Lilienthal's schedules but reveals the substantially lower rates at which private companies could sell current and still make a 6-percent profit "on all useful fixed capital and provide for an additional 5½ percent on such capital in depreciation and taxes."

Since a vast majority of the American people are served by private companies, the findings of the engineers and accountants of the New York Authority will not only be of great value to the municipalities of the Northeastern states affected by the St. Lawrence project, but are of equal value to hundreds of municipalities over the nation engaged in battles for lower rates. (Copies can be obtained from Mr. Walsh at 80 Centre Street, New York City.) One of the startling results of the study is the demonstration that distribution costs are surprisingly uniform, the only material factor causing wide variations being the amount of current used. No longer can power spokesmen explain, for example, why private domestic rates should be 12 cents in Florida, 6 cents in New York and 4 cents in Cleveland because of "greatly varying conditions." Volume used, which is dependent on costs, is what counts.

The survey, made by a corps of competent engineers, is the first of its kind. It not only reveals the actual cost of distributing current in seventeen municipalities in New York State, including New York City and twelve cities in five other states, but develops and sets out a method by which a town council or group of citizens anywhere can, with the help of their city engineer, ascertain a fair rate to be charged by any private company serving them. Only a few of the major findings and conclusions of the survey may be indicated here, but they will suffice to show its trend and reveal its intrinsic value.

Since this pioneer report will be attacked by the utilities, it is germane to note its origin and method. Chairman Walsh explains that the law directs his board to fix rates for St. Lawrence power on a "true cost data" basis, whether distributed by public or private agencies. To discover generating and high-line transmission costs was easy. Not so with local distribution. On that subject the technical literature even of engineering societies was suspiciously silent. For years, Morris L. Cooke, Philadelphia engineer, then a member of the Authority and now on the President's National Power Policy Committee, had vainly urged power executives and engineers to investigate the question of distribution costs. Mr. Cooke had pointed out that of the nation's annual electric bill—roughly $2,000,000,000—one-half, or $1,000,000,000, at least, was charged for distribution. The Authority held this proportion to be too high, but was compelled to instigate its own inquiry to find what such costs actually are.

The Edison Electric Institute reports that the consumption of electricity in the average American home is around 50 kilowatt hours per month, or 600 k.w.h. per year. What, then, is the actual total fair cost of distributing this amount of current in New York State? The Power Authority report answers: 2½ cents per k.w.h. But on an average usage of 1,200 k.w.h. per year the cost drops to 1.7 cents per k.w.h., and if 4,800 k.w.h. are used, which, by the way, is the actual consumption in Winnipeg, Canada, where the average cost is less than one cent, the cost drops to seven mills. This does not include generating or long-distance transmission costs. But since these latter costs amount to only one cent, the Authority announces that the people of New York State could be served by private companies at a general average of 3½ cents per k.w.h. for 600 hours' annual use, instead of around 6 cents, which they are now paying. A customer using 1,200 k.w.h. should pay 2.7 cents, and one using 4,000 k.w.h. should pay 1.7 cents.

These justified reductions would cut the average $3 electric bill to $1.75 a month and save the average consumer $15 a year. To put it another way, the average housewife should be getting more than 100 k.w.h. for the same money she now pays for 50. In some New York cities the same price should buy 200.

By the same token, small business houses and professional men would save money in like proportion. Applying these ratios, the report estimates savings totaling $63,000,000 a year for New York State alone, or a reduction of 22 percent in the total electric bill. For the Northeastern area, which will be affected by the St. Lawrence yardstick, these

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savings, including those on municipal lighting, are estimated at $194,000,000. This includes New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and the New England States. These findings justify the charge made by Morris Cooke in The New Republic some months ago that the American people were being overcharged from four to five hundred million dollars on their annual electric bill.

Distribution costs in municipally owned plants over the country, such as Seattle, Tacoma, Pasadena and Jamestown, turn out to be much lower than in private plants even when allowance is made for taxes. A big surprise of the report, however, is that distribution costs in rural areas are lower than has generally been understood and that in particular "farm customers in extensive areas surrounding municipalities can be included under a single city-rate schedule without materially affecting the charges to urban consumers."

It begins to be clear why the electrical industry has so long opposed critical investigation and analysis in the field of distribution. It is surprising, however, in view of protestations by the Edison Electric Institute of an earnest desire to coöperate with the public, that the Power Authority was denied any substantial help from the holding companies or their subsidiary operating companies and was forced to send a corps of its own engineers into the field to dig up the facts. They even got little help from the operating people. As one local employee expressed it, "I'd rather you wouldn't ask me even the closing time of the office."

Fascist Maneuvers in France

THE FALL of Premier Doumergue was only a surface incident in the continuing crisis in France. Although the parties of the left forced his resignation, it was not a victory for them. If anything, it appears to have strengthened the reactionaries; Doumergue's reforms were not his personal property and will remain after him.

The famous Doumergue proposals, hailed by the conservatives both in France and abroad as the one method of saving French democracy, are, in fact, exactly the reverse. Their objects are to give the Premier the right to dissolve Parliament, to curtail the initiative of Parliament in voting the budget, to transform the status of the great army of French civil servants so that this nationwide bureaucracy can be made into a handy tool for the reactionaries. They amount to drastic changes in the French Constitution that frankly aim to establish an authoritarian state.

The tiny monarchist and Bonapartist wings of French politics have long demanded a more reactionary government, but it is relatively a new position for the various republican parties, conservative though they are. The machinery of the Third Republic has served them faithfully for sixty-four years. Why should they be so anxious to change it now? The answer lies in the economic situation The depression still continues to deepen i France. Unemployment continues to spread. Th government's revenue from monopolies durin July, August and September was a billion franc less than in the same month of 1933, and in th same period the yield from indirect taxes shran by another billion. In the first three-quarters o the present year customs receipts and the business turnover tax had both fallen by nearly six percent In the meantime France stands with her currency pegged high on gold, unable because of her large *rentier* class to cut the gold content of the franc and achieve at least the temporary benefits obtained from devaluation by the United States and Great Britain.

But though the critical nature of the situation suggests that the reactionaries move fast, the power of the leftist elements has made it unwise to do so. At the far left stands the united front of the Socialist and Communist Parties, all the more impressive because the leaders of both, less than lukewarm toward coöperation, were forced into it by powerful popular pressure from their memberships. Both parties are without strong or popular leaders, but the mass of factory workers is with them. As a result nothing like a repetition of February 6 is now possible. Before the united front, the fascist groups could arrange their riots and go into the street with nobody to fight against them but the half-hearted police. Now every time the rightist forces stage a demonstration, a more powerful Socialist-Communist demonstration comes out to meet it. In France the German road to fascism is blocked. The working class is more unified than are its enemies. But fascism as a result of parliamentary maneuvers is wholly possible.

For this reason in recent months the forces of the right have turned their attention to the development of parliamentary levers toward fascist power. The first requisite for this is unity among the bourgeois parties. The great stumbling block to such unity has been the Radical Socialist Party, which though described as "left" in French politics is actually a party of the center ("center" parties in France are really rightist), and represents the minor officials, shopkeepers and small, provincial business men. It was the refusal of the Radical Socialists to back Doumergue's proposals during the summer, and the refusal of Herriot, the party's outstanding chief, to support Doumergue two weeks ago, that led to the latter's resignation.

But there are vital questions not disposed of by a change in the premiership. In the first instance it is by no means sure that Doumergue's resignation was caused so much by differences about policy as by personal matters. His attempts, backed by André Tardieu, to disregard his Cabinet and govern alone had won him many enemies in his own ranks. There is a further, and more serious possibility, that a larger political game may be in play. It is rumored that Doumergue had reached the point where he

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thought that with a little radio campaign and a neatly staged street riot in Paris he could dispense with the support of the Radical Socialists and proceed to put over his reforms by what in substance would have been a coup d'état, a successful repetition of last February on a slightly different scale. Wiser heads in Paris are reported to have been opposed to this. They believed such a step at this point would plunge the country into a doubtful civil war. Whether they objected to civil war may be questionable, but certainly they objected to the doubtfulness—particularly when there seemed another and safer way to the desired end.

The key to the matter is the Radical Socialist Party. If this group can be brought into the reactionary camp, the chances of fascist success are so greatly improved that they seem to have every prospect of victory. But at the moment such a combination cannot be made. The recent municipal elections were a definite mandate to the Radicals to avoid any combination with the right, and for the moment this mandate must be obeyed. But the chiefs of this party have no program of their own, and while they have no love for an authoritarian state, they have probably less love for the growing power of the united front of Socialists and Communists. It is not impossible that they have resigned themselves to the choice of the lesser evil and are hoping for some way to support Doumergue's proposals without proclaiming themselves open traitors to the mandate of their party members. One aid in such a step, is, of course, to accept Doumergue's proposals without Doumergue. Another might be the need for a unity in the face of foreign difficulties.

In the light of the last possibility the date of Doumergue's resignation may be significant. The immediate task of the Chamber is to consider the budget, a task that will consume approximately two months and is bound in the end to develop into a new debate on the Doumergue reforms. In two months the Saar plebiscite, however the voting may go, will create an international tension. It would not then be difficult for Herriot and his fellow chiefs of the Radicals to find that the national safety required some painful sacrifices of their party's program.

Nor is there anything in the personality of the new premier, Pierre-Etienne Flandin, one time Minister of Finance, to give assurance that the fascist forces in France are routed and in retreat. André Tardieu, to be sure, is out of the new Cabinet, but the Catholic Church, which in France is much more closely allied with big business than it is in Germany, is apparently more powerfully represented than under Doumergue, and M. Flandin himself is highly approved in French financial circles. He is described as "clever" and "energetic," two adjectives that could not possibly be applied to the aged and lethargic Doumergue. And it is precisely energy and cleverness that will be required to put through the changes in the French Constitution that the reactionary forces feel are now necessary.

The Supreme Court in Reverse

THAT BUNDLE of concepts we call the "Constitution," though many of these concepts cannot be found in the document itself, is undergoing a fundamental change. The two decisions made this year by the United States Supreme Court on the New York Milk Control Law complete a sharp break with the dominant opinions of the Court during the past generation, and pave the way for acceptance of the regulatory, price-fixing and wage-fixing aspects of the recovery program. In the first case, Nebbia *vs.* New York, decided by a five-to-four decision on March 5, the Court returned to an older view of the "due process" clause, that *bête noir* of liberal legislation, and declined to identify it any longer with laissez-faire. It upheld the fixing of prices paid the farmer for milk and the prices to be paid by the consumer, though shielding itself behind the fiction that these were minimum prices:

> . . . Neither property rights nor contract rights [Justice Roberts wrote for the Court] are absolute. . . . Equally fundamental with the private right is that of the public to regulate it in the common interest. . . . The Constitution does not guarantee the unrestricted privilege to engage in a business or to conduct it as one pleases . . . the right to conduct a business or to pursue a calling may be conditional. . . . So far as the requirement of due process is concerned, and in the absence of other constitutional restriction, a state is free to adopt whatever economic policy may reasonably be deemed to promote public welfare.

It is true that the Court still holds vast power in reserve for itself by maintaining the view that under due process a law may not be "unreasonable, arbitrary or capricious." But it is more ready to recognize that authority to decide what is so shades off very quickly into the field of legislation. Above all, its view of what is "reasonable" has changed drastically. For this same Court held in 1927, 1928 and 1929 that price and fee fixing in "ordinary" business violated the due-process clause and was unconstitutional. The Court, in effect, no longer recognizes the existence of "ordinary" businesses, in the sense of businesses that do not admit of regulation. When the New York State Court of Appeals held the milk-control law constitutional, it did so on the ground that milk was a "paramount industry" —the concept set up by the majority decision of the Oklahoma ice case in holding that regulation of the ice business was unconstitutional. The New York Court still clung to the skirts of recent tradition by holding that "an ordinary business essentially private in its nature" could not be regulated. This was, in fact, the whole point of the Oklahoma decision. But in the light of the Nebbia case there are no businesses "essentially private" in their nature.

This may sound revolutionary, but property rights were never absolute in the old common law nor even in our own day. It is merely that more

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hallowed limitations, from the criminal law to the health ordinance, were so customary as to have grown invisible. Chief Justice Lemuel Shaw of Massachusetts, one of the greatest jurists in our history, wrote in 1846:

> All property is acquired and held under the tacit condition that it will not be used to injure the equal rights of others, or to destroy or greatly impair the public rights and the interest of the community; under public rights and the interest of the community. . . .

And the Court, in first laying the basis for legislative regulation of business in 1876, inadvertently provided the means, through its newly unearthed idea of "business affected with a public interest," to implement a growing need for ever greater interference. Unfortunately, under the pressure of rising big business, the Court, by the 1890's, took the due-process clause—a clause that had till then meant due procedure and nothing more—and made it synonymous with laissez-faire. And by the 1920's the public-interest concept became a device for narrowing rather than widening legislative power.

Recently, in the Hegeman Farms Corporation case, decided on November 5, the Court again emphasized the older view of regulation and declined to review or change the prices fixed. When in 1876, in Munn *vs.* Illinois, the Court laid the basis for regulation, it held that the reasonableness of the rates charged was for the legislature and not for the courts to decide. It was not until 1890 that the Court lugged "confiscatory" into due process, assumed the right to review rates and changed rates fixed by a State Commission. The due-process clause had thus become a means of making the Court not merely a super-legislature but also a super-utility-commission. The Court now shows some unwillingness to enter the metaphysical morass of "fair value" and "fair return."

The Hegeman Farms Corporation argued that it could not pay farmers the prices fixed by law and still earn "a fair return on the present value of the properties devoted by it to its milk business, less depreciation." But the Court declines to give the milk business the status of a public utility. At best, to do so would mean fixing farm prices low enough and consumers' prices high enough to give even the most inefficient distributor a profit. At its worst, as the experience of utility regulation has shown, this establishes a premium on inefficiency and spurs the development of complicated corporate structures by which profits can be drained out at the expense of the consumer. Under the N.R.A. code structure, all business bids fair to become a "public utility," and it would be well to avoid the evils of utility regulation from the start. Unfortunately, and this explains why there was unanimous concurrence in Justice Cardozo's opinion, the Court leaves itself enough loopholes to resume at any time it chooses the practice of reviewing rates and guaranteeing "fair return" on "fair value."

"We are to beware," Justice Cardozo wrote some years ago, "of the insularity of mind that perceives in every inroad upon habit a catastrophic revolution." We might equally beware of perceiving in every inroad upon absolute property rights an indication of social betterment. The new attitude of the Court, pragmatic and open-minded, paves the way for a more general embodiment in law of the social character and responsibilities of property and business. But in this case as well, to echo Justice Holmes, general rules do not decide specific cases. The Court may be providing a bridge for peaceful transition to a collectivist order. Or it may merely be smoothing the way for the erection of greater and more dangerous monopolies than ever. Fine philosophically, the New York milk-control law is bad practically. As the Court itself shows, the spread between the price paid the farmer and the price paid by the consumer has widened since the law went into effect. The distributor's take has been increased but the farmer's earnings are still too low.

The Court is to be praised for not invalidating the law on the grounds of its policy, but the Court should emphasize that the responsibility for policy is the legislature's. The state regulates the milk business, but the milk business in turn regulates the state. And this particular form of the riddle "Which comes first, the chicken or the egg?" admits of a ready answer. The great milk companies are the prime movers. Is this to become universal under the "American Socialism" of the New Deal? Does the new acceptance of social responsibility necessarily imply social reform?

> A freedom of action which might have been justified in the relatively simple life of the last century cannot be tolerated today, because the unwise action of one individual may adversely affect the lives of thousands. We have left the period of extreme individualism and are living in a period in which national economy must be recognized as a controlling factor.

What liberal here echoes the great words of Chief Justice Shaw? The speaker is none other than Henry I. Harriman, president of the United States Chamber of Commerce. And Mr. Harriman is not seeking to bring about a collective society—even by degrees.

THE NEW REPUBLIC

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Security for Americans

I: *Social Insurance Comes to the Fore*

ALMOST everybody, it would seem, is for social insurance. President Roosevelt has asked Congress to undertake this winter "the great task of furthering the security of the citizen and his family through social insurance." The die-hard leaders of the Republican Party declare in favor of unemployment insurance and old-age pensions. A busy Cabinet committee and a staff of overworked government experts are toiling on a comprehensive program of social security. Politicians of every stripe felt obliged to include social insurance in their miscellany of preëlection promises. The question holds the front and editorial pages of our newspapers. Scores of writers, tired of the depression, Technocracy and the gold standard, expound their dreams of social insurance. A few conservatives would use it to forestall communism, while some radicals hope it may destroy capitalism.

Earnest students of the problem must feel perplexed and aghast at this lavish devotion from unexpected quarters. Not so long ago any method of alleviating need was a "dole," "un-American" and nefarious. A social-insurance plank in a candidate's platform spelled political suicide. Only yesterday the American Federation of Labor was proscribing the movement as destructive of the "American standard of living." Moreover, a careful observer can espy in the new social-insurance chorus many former worshipers at the shrine of Hoover, Mellon and Ford, who only a short while ago proclaimed that depressions are a thing of the past and that, despite the law of gravitation, stocks would always go up.

No wonder students of social insurance are apprehensive. There is value in the new enthusiasm, but there is all too little evidence of any comprehension of the real issues. Current discussions rarely display even a cursory knowledge of the elementary principles underlying a system that has been in practical operation abroad for fifty years. The new converts are hugging a pet theory or a panacea under the name of social insurance. Just as instalment buying, employee stock ownership and endless production were the cure-alls in the blessed era of Coolidge and Hoover, so social insurance seems to many of the new prophets the open sesame to an economic heaven under the New Deal. Social insurance is lumped with housing, public works, shorter working hours, land reclamation and even decentralization of industry. Many converts see in it the means of turning depression into prosperity.

A fog of ignorance hides the extremely simple aims and purposes of unemployment insurance. Stand-patters claim the depression as an exclusively "American problem which must be solved in an American manner" and piously declare that the "only remedy for unemployment is employment." Some opponents, unaware of the difference between private and social insurance, blandly argue that unemployment is not an insurable risk. While the naïve urge the government to assume the entire burden of insurance, there are the subtle claims that any governmental participation is relief. Some exponents of unemployment insurance, untaught by five years of depression, still insist that its chief aim is to prevent unemployment by stabilizing industry. The optimists seek to cure *all* ills through this legislation, while the pessimists bemoan the lack of resources from which to draw funds. Although no legislation has as yet been enacted and the fiscal features are totally unknown, there is already a carload of panicky literature on the financial dangers of large insurance reserves. A group of learned professors have already worried themselves and their readers sick about the effects of the realization of the billions of dollars of accumulated funds on the next depression, which in all likelihood will never materialize, since no one knows when we will come out of the present one.

There is just as much confusion about other phases of social insurance. There is little understanding of the relation of non-contributory pensions and contributory old-age insurance. The development of public opinion favorable to this provision has brought harvests of cash to fakers and crackpots. A year ago the biggest attraction in the movement was a chiropractor from Tulsa, Oklahoma, with a thirty-year criminal record for fraudulent mail schemes. Through a dime-membership chain he obtained hundreds of thousands of members by the promise of a pension of $30 a month at the age of forty. This year the foot specialist is losing out to a general medical practitioner from Long Beach, California, who is multiplying the Tulsa man's customers many times by holding out the bait of $200 a month, to be spent within the month, at sixty. With hundreds of thousands of voters throughout the land clamoring for this scheme, many congressmen are forced to declare themselves in its favor. Newspapers which, during the twenty-five-year struggle for a genuine old-age-security movement, ignored the subject now devote columns to the new promises.

In health and disability insurance the confusion is just as great. The primary aim of health insur-

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ance is to provide immediate medical and financial aid for the sick and their dependents. The programs suggested in the United States range all the way from meaningless local-clinic gestures to utopian dreams of a public-health service for the future generation.

In this introductory article I can but sketch the major principles of social insurance. It cannot be overemphasized that social insurance is not a perfectionist program. It cannot abolish all the evils of the present social order. It can neither fully stabilize capitalism nor bring about the social revolution. Social insurance does not challenge any social system, for communist, fascist and capitalist countries have all found it useful in alleviating the common ills resulting from industrial civilization. The radical possibility of social insurance lies only in a more equitable distribution of wealth. Its chief benefit to capitalist society lies in cushioning depressions and in maintaining wage levels and the self-respect of workers. It is chiefly applicable to wage and salaried workers in industry and, to a lesser extent, to agricultural workers and professional groups. Sound programs of public works and housing serve other essential purposes and are complementary to, but not parts of, social insurance. Social insurance should no more be tied up with a program for decentralization of industry than with a program of land reclamation or a barter system.

In social insurance the splendid instrumentality of insurance finds its fullest realization. By a widespread distribution of fire or death risks an insurance company is able to guarantee full protection to its policyholders on the actuarial principle that neither all homes burn nor all men die at the same time. Through the common sharing of a common risk, the unfortunate receive immediate assistance while the rest of us willingly bear the small cost for the sake of our own security.

Everybody has sung the praises of private insurance in the United States. Much less has been said about its total inadequacy to meet our needs. Not only are many of us unable to carry sufficient life insurance, but none of us is protected against unemployment, and only a few persons are able to buy insurance against old age and sickness. The reason is simple. Under private insurance each one of us must bear the entire cost of our protection plus the huge competitive overhead costs, and we simply cannot afford such expenditures.

Social insurance is designed to overcome the handicaps that make it impossible for private companies to protect the incomes of wage and salaried workers. It does this first by distributing the risk over the widest possible number of workers throughout a state, or preferably the nation. Second, by setting up a unified obligatory system, it eliminates the exorbitant costs of solicitation and the inexcusably excessive salaries of private-insurance officials. Third, social insurance distributes the costs on an equitable basis among as many elements of society as possible so as to enable the wage earners to obtain adequate protection. Ideally, it endeavors to place a large share upon those in the community who can best afford to bear it, namely, the recipients of large incomes and inheritances.

An intelligent plan of social insurance aiming at stability and adequacy seeks to divide the costs equitably among employers, employees and the government. Contributions on the part of employers are taken for granted, not because they are individually responsible for unemployment, sickness or old-age dependency, but because this protection is a legitimate charge upon production. Direct employee contributions cannot be defended in theory, but it is practical wisdom to encourage them for the beneficial psychological effect, for the sake of better administration and, especially, for the more adequate benefits they make possible. The government must not only directly participate in the costs of insurance, but must, in addition, through the instrumentality of the insurance administration, aid those who, through no fault of their own, exhaust the necessarily limited benefits made possible under the insurance plan. Governmental participation is inevitable and must not be shirked. Its burden is even heavier without such insurance benefits, and in social insurance it is legitimate to integrate relief and insurance in the one plan. In short, the emphasis must be on the *social* features of social insurance. As Professor Paul H. Douglas has so well put it, social insurance regards the solidarity of society to be such "that greater relative protection may be properly given to those in the greatest relative need." Governmental participation is especially justified when the funds are derived to a large degree from those who have most.

The urgent need of a comprehensive system of social insurance in the United States cannot be questioned. Its wide acceptance abroad, which the depression has stimulated rather than curtailed, is evidence of its practicability and workability. However, in developing a constructive program of social insurance for the immediate future in the United States it is as important to be guided by a realistic appreciation of the present possibilities as by the urgent social need. Since the underlying forces that caused us to remain decades behind other industrial nations in social legislation are still at work and are as formidable as ever, an attempt to introduce a complete and final program of social insurance at this time would be self-defeating. The difficulties in enforcing Section 7a of the N.I.R.A. are right before us. Moreover, our constitutional form of government has not been abandoned and a defeat in the courts would mean several decades' delay for the whole program, as the history of the Child Labor Amendment has clearly shown.

At this time it is essential to lay the foundations for a solid and sound program of social insurance. Let me briefly indicate the program that seems to me both feasible and sound. Since the American

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public is now chiefly concerned with provisions for the unemployed and the aged, the program to be presented to the next Congress must of necessity be confined to these two phases, both of which involve immediate relief and a future program of insurance.

No system of contributory old-age insurance can take care of the aged immediately. A system of non-contributory pensions, somewhat more adequate and improved than the systems now in operation in over a score of states, offers the only immediate way of meeting our distressing and accumulated problem of old-age dependency. An insurance plan established at the same time can provide for the future needs. In view of the financial difficulties of many states a federal system of subsidies to these states becomes immediately paramount. A bill for this purpose has already received the unanimous approval of the congressional committees in two consecutive Congresses. Had President Roosevelt said one word in its favor, it would have been enacted into law by the last Congress.

It is obvious that today's needs of the unemployed cannot be met by an insurance system that can begin to pay benefits only a year or two after it is established. But the argument that if an unemployment-insurance system cannot function immediately nothing should be done about it is of a piece with the judgment of a physician who would not attend a seriously ill patient because he could not restore him to health at once. The army of unemployed is a shifting rather than a permanent one. The man who is employed today may be among the unemployed of tomorrow, and vice versa. While the immediate needs of the unemployed can be met only through an adequate and self-respecting system of relief, this can be taken over immediately and administered more economically and more adequately by the insurance administration through the institution of a work-test than could possibly be done under the present haphazard and degrading doles.

While no one questions the desirability of preventing unemployment, a sound unemployment-insurance plan must aim chiefly to help the unemployed. The Wisconsin system of individual company reserves must therefore be completely ruled out of consideration, since it has nothing in common with either insurance in general or social insurance in particular, its primary purpose being to help the "good" employers. It distributes neither the risk nor the burden, and, as a stimulant to company unionism, it will definitely tend to undermine the growth of effective trade unions. Unless the unemployment-insurance system is based on true principles of social insurance it will not be worth the paper it is written on.

Should the plan be placed on a federal basis? Federal legislation is, of course, by far the superior method. However, the congressional record on social legislation has not only been barren prior to the New Deal, but the constitutionality of even the New Deal legislation is still undecided. Should a federal social-insurance act prove unconstitutional, the movement will suffer a serious setback.

Should we accept the device of the Wagner-Lewis Bill? This plan for a federal excise tax upon all employers, to be remitted in the case of employers contributing to state insurance funds, is ingenious, but its chance for success is only about even. Aside from its doubtful constitutionality, I am not so hopeful as others about its stimulating effects upon individual states. American employers' opposition to labor legislation is more ideological than economic, and long years of experience should teach us not to hope for social and economic wisdom from them and their organizations.

The federal subsidy system, to my mind, affords the most feasible and practicable plan at this time. The extension of federal aid to states is not only constitutional but in line with our established traditions. Serious as the drawbacks of separate state legislation are, it is a historic fact that workmen's compensation laws, mothers' pensions and old-age pensions have each in their turn spread over the major part of the United States within half a decade or less. This occurred without any aid from the federal government. With liberal grants-in-aid the most important states will rapidly fall in line. By conditioning the grant upon satisfactory standards, an adequate and uniform administration can be obtained. All dangers of constitutional nullification are eliminated under this plan and the New Deal has it within its powers to provide for an adequate subsidy at once. On the other hand, should the New Deal suffer a demise and the courts declare a direct federal law unconstitutional, the Old Dealers will not only block a constitutional amendment but also new federal legislation.

No one at this writing knows the exact program to be sponsored by the President's Committee on Economic Security. Statements in the press purporting to come from members of the Committee are contradictory and indefinite. The responsibility of initiating a constructive social-insurance program lies squarely upon the shoulders of the President's Committee. It must not only prepare a sound and feasible program, but must make it public considerably before the 1935 legislative sessions open on January 1. Most state legislatures meet for only sixty days or short periods. Pressure will be brought to delay state legislation until Congress acts. If Congress does not act immediately, this legislation may be delayed for another two years since most state legislatures meet only every other year. The President's promises thwarted congressional action on old-age pensions and unemployment insurance last spring. There must be no further delay in their fulfilment.

ABRAHAM EPSTEIN.

This is the first of a series of articles dealing with security for Americans. The next article, to be published in an early issue, will be a discussion of the Ohio Plan by I. M. Rubinow.—THE EDITORS.

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The Kingfish on His Way

HUEY P. LONG seemed politically finished. As little as nine months ago his ranting and demagoguery appeared to have earned him a well merited exit. Today, however, the bewildered belief of many is that Huey's grasp upon the destinies of his state is stronger than it ever was, that his national stature, instead of diminishing, is attaining Gargantuan proportions, that the White House hopes he has so long nursed in secret are less fantastic than they once seemed. These conclusions follow his victories in the Louisiana election last week, victories that confirmed his surprising triumph in the September state primaries, which elected two Long congressmen, a Long-supported Supreme Court judge and a Long-controlled member of the powerful Louisiana Public Service Commission, all from the First and Second Congressional Districts embracing the city of New Orleans and the immediately adjoining parishes.

It was in the city of New Orleans, last January, that the Old Regular city machine gained a smashing victory over the Long ticket in a memorable mayoralty campaign. Because this followed the armed revolt and congressional victory of the anti-Longs in the Sixth Congressional District, the opposition prepared to bury the corpse. But they overlooked the fact that these victories could have little more than a warning effect upon the members of the Louisiana legislature and the rest of the state governmental machine. These legislators and other office holders came in on the continued surge of Longism two and a half years ago, when Huey's rubber-stamp Governor, O. K. Allen, was placed in office and Huey went on to the United States Senate. They still have nearly two years to fatten on the patronage and preferments that are theirs as long as they do as Huey commands.

Twice since last spring the legislature has executed his will, in a regular and a special session which with ruthless precision and dispatch guillotined the opposition. These legislative antics were primarily with a weather eye upon the September elections in New Orleans. Mayor T. Semmes Walmsley of New Orleans, the former ally whose Old Regular organization had helped forge the dictatorial chain about Louisiana, had badly hurt Huey's state and national prestige when he broke with Long's machine, defeated it in the New Orleans mayoralty campaign and chased off to Washington with the avowed though unrealized purpose of beating Huey up. The New Orleans organization had to be punished, the September elections won and the state administration perpetuated. The legislature proved to be a willing tool.

It is impossible in a brief survey even to outline the results of the shameful regular session of the Louisiana legislature in June and July and of the special session held a few weeks later with the avowed purpose of humbling the New Orleans machine and independents. In the former election, crooks were pardoned both retroactively and in advance, a punitive tax on daily newspapers was levied, sulphur and corporation-franchise taxes were increased, and an income tax and another public-utilities tax were passed or proposed through constitutional amendments which were to be ratified by the people this month. The same undiminished appropriations were made for the various state departments forming the administration payroll machine, and all economy proposals were tossed in the garbage can. These bills were railroaded by two-thirds majorities in the regular session. The opposition fumed, held bloodthirsty mass meetings, vowed vengeance. But there was no cohesion among them. The legislature—Huey's "sacks of potatoes"—went serenely on, content to obey orders at any cost, secure in the protection of scores of plain-clothes state police and the ever present threat of the militia.

Then came the special session, exclusively directed at the city of New Orleans. Before its end, there had been fist fights on the floor, reporters and photographers had been slugged and their cameras stolen, and twenty-eight bills had been passed, of which nineteen were directly or indirectly aimed at New Orleans and the coming elections. Out of this session Huey emerged in the pot-and-kettle role of a crusader against vice and a self-appointed savior of the people of New Orleans from the Tammanyistic New Orleans ring. Through his dummy Governor he was supreme commander of the state militia and an unlimited state police force, whose actions, as a result of the session, could not be interfered with by civil judges. Parish boards of election supervisors, appointed by the governor, were given power to name special officers to serve in elections at $5 each, and to select special deputies to supersede the regular sheriffs' deputies in delivering and collecting ballot boxes. The civil courts were prohibited from issuing writs of seizure to take records from the office of the registrar of voters, a state-appointed official in New Orleans, who is empowered to scratch the names of voters alleged to have registered illegally.

Through these and a welter of minor bills, Huey got control of the city election machinery. His accompanying campaign against vice, which was to be shouted over the radio from then until the elections, was born in bills authorizing a legislative investigation of New Orleans, preventing dissemination of racing information and imposing heavy penalties upon lottery operators. Then "Der Furore"

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moved upon New Orleans with his military, three weeks before the election. His militia guarded his palatial New Orleans home, and occupied the office of the registrar of voters, across the street from the City Hall. The youngsters of the militia and the regular and special city police faced each other across a narrow alley in a bloodless opera-bouffe show. Huey began blaring over the radio about the vicious moral and economic condition of New Orleans under the Old Regulars. He had special assessors appointed to supersede the regular city assessors, with the promise of reduced assessments —and a tacit contrary threat if things didn't turn out as they should. Under military guard his legislative committee began its vice investigation, the attendant testimony broadcast by radio although the press and the public were barred from the hearings. As special prosecutor, Huey smirched the records of the Old Regular-endorsed candidates for Congress, the Supreme Court and the Public Service Commission. He pointed out the very apparent connection between the petty vice life of a large and Latin port city and the police and city ring. Then, when the militant Old Regulars answered threat with threat and imported from Honduras Colonel Guy Molony, former Orleanian and noted soldier of fortune, to take charge of their armed forces, Huey called into New Orleans every National Guardsman in the state. Bloodshed seemed imminent, but at the last minute a compromise was effected and both sides kept their armed men from the polls. When the votes were counted, Huey's candidates were victorious, with majorities of from seven to fifteen thousand.

Perhaps no Louisiana election has ever been so surprising, certainly not to those outside the city and state. And even Huey Long, on the word of a close associate, was dumbfounded at the convincing margin of victory. The only answer is that the victory was prepared by the legislative enactments, and resulted primarily from four factors: (1) the tremendous 20-to-1 "counted in advance" majorities always rolled up for Long in the country parishes surrounding New Orleans and included with it in the two congressional districts; (2) the so-called "vice vote" in New Orleans; (3) the animosity of thousands of Orleanians to thirty years of Old Regular domination; and (4) the weakness of the candidates offered by the Old Regulars, plus the financial weakness of the organization itself.

To defeat Huey Long in the First and Second Congressional Districts, a tremendous majority must be polled in New Orleans itself. The parishes of St. Bernard and Jefferson have previously won national note by casting more votes for Long or his candidates than the total number of adults, white and black, in the parishes. A benevolent subdictatorship has for years ruled these and the smaller border parishes, St. Charles, St. James, Plaquemines and St. John, in the interests of Long. Sheriffs and deputies and judges participate in the spoils, and the great, protected gambling casinos, the largest in the South, have rarely been bothered regardless of punitive moves against the smaller fry of New Orleans.

These parishes turned in the usual majorities with ease. To offset their vote, New Orleans would have had to show a majority of 18,000 for the Old Regulars. In the old days that would have been a comparatively simple matter, for the ring controlled the city elections and counted themselves in regardless of the opposition of independents or alliances. But Huey had thrown a monkey wrench into the works. His legislature had stripped the election control from the Old Regulars, had perpetuated his own powerful payroll organization in New Orleans, while weakening the financial strength of the ring, and through the politically well timed legislative investigation had thoroughly intimidated the "vice crowd," which, thriving under bought protection, had always voted with the Old Regulars. Conservative estimates place the "vice vote"—including the red-light district, the lottery operators and the racing handbook and gambling fraternity—at about nine thousand. And it is an established fact that while Huey was denouncing vice and the Old Regular control of it, his ward leaders and heelers were busy with promises that if the "vice crowd" voted right, the investigation would be dropped after the election. If not, the militia and enlarged state police would mop up. The boys and girls "voted right." The Old Regulars barely got an even break in New Orleans, and were swamped by the country vote. Therefore, immediately after the election, Mayor Walmsley announced a clean-up campaign. The gamblers and handbook men, the red-light women and lottery operators, had been caught between two fires. The Old Regulars cleaned them up and out in retaliation.

Another important contributory factor to Long's victory was the financial and personal weakness of the Old Regulars and their candidates, respectively. The legislature had cut off one source of the city's revenue by forbidding the levying of any city license taxes that were not expressly named by the state. Under the shadow of lowered property assessments, the Old Regulars were faced with another loss of funds. Nearly a million dollars of anticipated city revenues were and still are tied up by court action by the state. When the Old Regulars broke with Long last January, hundreds of shared political jobs became the exclusive right of the state machine. Aware of all this, the "job-voters" flocked to Long.

The usurped power of assessment no doubt frightened big property holders into line, and held promise of relief to smaller ones. Huey's broadcasts were colorful, and close enough to the truth to make many ardent reformers forget that Huey's crusading role was ironic to anyone acquainted with the broader field of state politics. There was a lack of leadership and planned action among the polyglot assortment of professional politicians and inflamed independents fighting Long. The Old

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Regulars, their padded registration rolls cleansed and supplanted by the lists of the opposition, and their supervisory power halved or worse, were unable to pull off any of their former sleights-of-hand. While the Long forces did little better because of the close supervision by both sides on election day, whatever election thievery occurred was in Long's favor. And undeniably Huey Long still has a large personal following among the Orleans masses, hypnotized by his promises of "wealth sharing," his attacks on the public utilities and his vigorous personality, especially on the stump.

But Huey hasn't completed his domination. Five of the eight Louisiana congressmen are actively opposed to Long, and all were successful in the September primaries in the rural areas. There is still anti-Long dynamite in the large and small towns of the country parishes. Yet the opposition is, and has been, leaderless in the true sense. No man has risen in Louisiana capable of statewide leadership for either a political or a physical revolt. The anti-Long forces flame to violent frenzy and then subside through lack of a commander whose political skirts are clean, whose ability and popular appeal approach that of Huey Long, and who is willing to brave the mud and muck of present-day Louisiana politics.

Hammond, La. HODDING CARTER.

Mountain Poorhouse

IT IS Sunday. Kirby and I haven't a place to go. We could go fishing, but Sunday bathing beauties are splashing the water so the fish won't bite. We could go to the "singing" down on the creek, but the boys won't be the least bit friendly down there today after the little row we had last night in the dark. Kirby snaps his finger and says, "I have it." "Have what?" "W'y let's crank the flivver and cross the hill to a Tennessee poorhouse." And I say, "It's okay with me."

The flivver chug-chugs like a mowing machine, for we have it in high gear running like a potato bug across a pretty Tennessee meadow. Now we go down in the creek-bed road and the gravels fly—up through a wood yard and barely miss a nice flock of frying-size pullets. We breeze down the bank, coast a little to save gas, and then we strain up the next hill and through a pair of draw bars and out where a pretty hard road squirms like a house snake around the Tennessee hills. "Won't be long about gettin' there now," says Kirby.

We pull up to a barb-wire fence and Kirby steps on the brake. The Ford is hot and it blows like a hot horse. We get out and Kirby says, "There she is right over there in the field." And I say to Kirby, "What's over there in the field?" "The poorhouse," he says. "See that lean-to built out of rough oak planks that looks like a coal shed? Boy that's her. That's the poorhouse." "The hell it is."

This poorhouse is a lean-to. However, it leans to nothing. It is built like a cow shed. It has five stalls in it. Each stall has one bed, a little stand, a little heating stove with a belly the size of a nail keg. Across the road the poorhouse keeper lives in a big fine two-story weather-boarded house. He sees us talking to the inmates over across the wire fence on his premises. He comes over. "Hello, Kirby," he says. "Hello, Radner," Kirby says. "Meet my friend Stuart here." We shake hands. His big hand has grown fairly soft for a farmer's hand. It feels like a butter paddle. "You boys looking here, air you Kirby?" "Yes, Mr. Radner, we're just out sponging around." "Well look around here and make yourselves at home. See what you can see." Kirby takes a package of Stud from his pocket and nervously rolls a cigarette. "Tax got so high here on ready-mades I've gone to smoking my own. Ain't near so much tax here on Stud in Tennessee as there is on ready-mades." Kirby puts the cigarette to his mouth and Radner lights it with a match for Kirby. The cigarette is curved like a chicken's bill. Kirby and Radner talk and I go down where the row of rooms begins.

The first has an old woman in it. She must be seventy-seven. Her knee cap is out of place and is around on the other side of her leg. She grumbles and says her knee is nearly killing her. It and her leg below her knee are swollen twice the normal size. She says, "Oh, if I could only get out of this place!" Out on a bench just below her stall sits "Uncle Peg." He is the life and noise of the fifteen inmates of the poorhouse. "How did you lose that leg?" "Lost it in the mines. Ain't been much good since I lost it."

While I am here talking to Uncle Peg a couple of small boys come out. One is a baby wearing a dress. I ask the boy his name. He says, "Bill." "What is your last name?" Uncle Peg says, "He don't know his name. He is a half-brother to this little boy with the dress on. His mamma is here. She is in that room down on yon end of the house. She is the only one that knows who their daddy is. She ain't never been married. She didn't have no place to go with them two little boys so she come here. Them is right pert boys and if it wasn't fer them here the place would be a lot lonesomer." And I ask the older boy, "How old are you?" "I don't know." Uncle Peg says, "That boy is eleven years old and he ain't been to school a day in his life. Them boys is shore to God fine boys though."

Kirby is still smoking on the Stud cigarette. He is talking to Radner too. They talk and Radner

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talks with his hands. He points to the corn patch and the potato patch and then he points to the house across the road where he lives. I look along in the stalls. There is only one door to each room. That makes five doors along the front. I go on down where I hear a noise in a stall. Uncle Peg hobbles along on his wooden leg with me.

We go into one stall where a skinny man is lying on a smelly mattress. "What is the matter with him?" I say to Uncle Peg. "W'y he was sent to the pen in Nashville and they made a girl out'n him over there them fellars did and he ain't been right since. He takes spells and he comes right out'n that bed and falls all over the floor. He bruises hisself up awful when he falls. See them little pipe-stem legs. He can't hardly walk on legs like them. I'd ruther have my one good leg and my one wooden leg as to have both of his'n. Radner keeps them old overalls on him and no underwear because he's so bad about wetting the bed. That mattress is nearly rotten." There he is on the mattress a heap of skin and bones. His face is pale blue and his lips are a deeper shade of blue.

Uncle Peg and I go on down the front of the poorhouse. In next to the last stall we find an old man of about eighty working on a chair. And Uncle Peg says after we get past where the old man can't hear, "He's been a bad'n. He's kilt two men before he come here. He's been in the pen. He won't do to fool with, but he's good when people mind their own business. He used to work in the mines too. He's busy all the time doing something. He likes to work. He can't quit work. He'd go crazy if he didn't have a cheer to fix 'r something."

In this last stall is a woman under heavy quilts on this hot June day. Uncle Peg says, "Don't talk to her. She's lost her mind. She'll be right out'n that bed if you talk to her. Jist let her do the talking and you listen and she'll stay in the bed." "How do you do, Buddy. What time is it? Half-past the corner. Half-past the corner. Half-past the corner." I do not answer. She pulls the quilts over her and lies back down in bed.

There is a woman here that can't talk. There is a young girl here that helps Radner's wife over at the big house across the road. There are two more elderly women here and two women I judge to be in their late forties. They sit on a little bench Radner has built for them in front of the shack. They watch the people pass down the road. There is not much for them to do around the shack. There is not much furniture in it. There is no yard to keep clean. Cooking is done over at Radner's house and carried across the road to them. Uncle Peg says to me as I start walking to where Radner and Kirby are, "Son, ain't you working fer the goverment? If you are working fer the goverment can't you help get us that old-age pension of $25 a month? That would be a lot of money and we could live better than we are living here on that much money—$25 a month!"

Kirby is rolling another cigarette as he talks on to Radner. Radner says, "W'y they ain't nuthin' here in this poorhouse but a bunch of whores, outlaws and killers. That's all they air. They ain't got nuthin' comin' to 'em. Why didn't they work and save somethin' like the good people 's done?" "How long have you had the poorhouse?" I say to Radner. "Since early last spring. I underbid a fellar round there in the bend. I bid under him a nickel a person per week. My bid was $2.30 for each one a week. Now I got fifteen you see."

"I don't see how you can make anything out of that, Radner. How can you feed them for that?"

"Now I don't mind to tell you, boys. Just don't say nothing about it. But I plan to feed them on $150 for the first six months. You see I got peas and beans in the garden, roastin' ears and 'taters are comin' in a plenty in the garden purty soon and I ain't goin' to be out much. I aim to feed them rough grub jist sich as beans, 'taters, peas, corn, middling-meat and greens. I'll make about $678 in clear money. I ain't telling this every place and to everybody. But I'll come out all right. And I get some help from here among these women. They help my wife. I can make it all right with what little gin-whacking I do about the place here."

"We had better be going," Kirby says and he takes the last draw off his home-made Stud. "Well, come back again, you fellars. Come back some time and gas around with me when you ain't got nuthin' to do." "Thank you a lot," says Kirby, "come up and gas around with me some time."

We crank the flivver. We get inside and Kirby says, "I tell you I never want to go to no poorhouse and be treated like that when I get old."

JESSE STUART.

Deep Harvest

The mild, the solid sound, American
Of lawnmowers roving on a grassy day
Is a mellow clatter, it is not only
A twist of blade laying the lawn away.
It is the audible summer in the States,
When hayfields wallow in the lovely grain.
And bees shoot in their tongues after the honey
As clovers hum and rock under the strain.
Now over all the land the wheat is blond,
It hisses and is quiet on its roots
As wind and windless happen to a place
And heat strikes home into the twinkling fruits,
The green blood of the leaves is duller now,
It is a foliage in her elegies:
From the great barns crawl out the loud machines
And the deep harvest lapses under these.
Yours and a native song let make, O blade,
Before the bough is blank and the cricket dead,
About my country's grass and the white crops,
How you possess them fragrant and to bed.

HILDEGARDE FLANNER.

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Washington Notes

Left Again, Right Again: What, Again?—Too Many Democrats—Who Is Going to Be Speaker?

ONE CANNOT help but notice, since the election, the increased confidence among the more conservative of the presidential advisers and friends. They have what to them is a most convincing argument to prove that from now on Mr. Roosevelt, tired of experimentation, will pursue an orthodox course, and that in his January message to Congress he will again strike the economy note, returning to the principles laid down in his first congressional message, March, 1933. That came ahead of the New Deal program and was a budget-balancing keynote. It was followed by the Economy Act, the reduction in the veteran-compensation load and a general paring down of federal expenses all along the line. In an extremely short time, however, the New Deal public-works and relief legislation changed the direction of the administration, and for the past eighteen months government billions have been pouring out in the hope of ending the depression.

There has been, so far as the administration is concerned, no talk of budget balancing and no reference to economy in a good many months. Men in closer touch with the President than those who attend the press conferences now sponsor the information that the President will again say to Congress that, while the hungry must be fed and the public-works program continued, the time has arrived when, in order to preserve federal credit, an approximate balance of the budget must be achieved—and not later than the fiscal year 1936-37. It is upon Mr. Roosevelt's determination to speak along these lines that the conservative group bases its belief that the President has definitely joined it—upon that and the series of White House and Hyde Park conferences he had with business leaders and bankers prior to the election.

It may be so, but the argument does not seem conclusive to me. For one thing, I do not see what else, as President, he can say. Of course he will urge the necessity of an ultimately balanced budget and will recommend to Congress all possible retrenchment and economy consistent with the spending program to which he is committed and from which he cannot retreat—even if he so desired. Of course he will make such recommendations, but what significance is there in that? None, so far as I can discern. Certainly not the date set for balancing the budget.

There seems to me to be just as much substance in the liberal contention that the tremendous and sweeping New Deal endorsement is calculated to free Mr. Roosevelt from his apprehensions—inculcated by one or two not wholly disinterested counsellors—that he badly needs banking and business support. It should be clear to him now that there is behind him a public sentiment that makes opposition from these interests futile—and dangerous for them; that the immense personal prestige he now enjoys is such as to compel the coöperation of the so-called business and financial interests in any program he lays down. Hence, it is urged, the President is free to put into effect the social legislation he planned for last session but for various reasons did not present. He also can now afford to disregard the pressure on him to retrace his steps in any direction. With such a personal endorsement as he has received it is not only fair to assume, but practically impossible not to assume, that the people want him to go forward, not back. Despite his lack of a real political philosophy, Mr. Roosevelt unquestionably considers himself a forward-looking man and regards his administration as liberal. Under the circumstances, it seems more reasonable to me that his liberal rather than conservative tendencies should have been stimulated by the election returns.

However, only time will tell about that. Meanwhile some of his more far-sighted friends believe that the huge party majorities the Democrats have won in both House and Senate do not mean easy administration sailing in the coming session. The contention is that, while the Republicans will be wholly negligible, the Democratic majorities are so big as to be unwieldy. The tendency to disregard party discipline and split away from the official floor leaders will be pronounced. Factions and groups will develop among the so-called Democrats, to many of whom the label is utterly meaningless. Further, it is pointed out that while Mr. Roosevelt's prestige has been heightened by the New Deal triumph in the recent election, the great bulk of his patronage has now been distributed and it will no longer be possible to penalize a recalcitrant Democrat by withholding his share of the pie. In most cases, the party leaders in the several states have got theirs.

These apprehensions may or may not materialize. A great deal naturally depends upon the type of program presented by the President. Even more depends upon the character of the House leadership. There was an admitted weakness in that during the last session and it is no secret that the administration strategists would like to see it strengthened this time. It seems still to be taken for granted that the White House would prefer Congressman Sam Rayburn of Texas to all the other candidates for the Speakership, but is embarrassed to find means of bringing about his election without exerting brutal force in pushing aside Mr. Joe Byrns of Tennessee, whose position puts him first in line.

Although the President must preserve complete surface neutrality in regard to the aspirants, who now number seven or eight, it is none the less likely that his preference will be made known in an unauthorized, unofficial but sufficiently definite way before the caucus is held. If the caucus is not to be chaotic, it seems almost essential that it should be. At present there are not more than 70 of the 300-odd Democrats of the next Congress pledged to any individual candidate, which means that no one is going to land the nomination without extraneous aid. The question of a strong House machine is considered fairly vital by the White House politicians, who foresee the certainty of one or two big veto fights during the session. One of these will be on the soldiers' bonus, concerning whose passage few seasoned observers in both House and Senate have any doubt. Whether it can be compromised to suit the President, or whether he can sustain a veto, are questions to which neither he nor anyone else at the present time knows the answers.

Washington. T. R. B.

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Other People's Money

Bootlegging Flour—Poor Chicago—Big Business Hooks Up with Roosevelt—Hats Off to the La Follettes!

OUT HERE in Chicago, particularly down near the Board of Trade, they think they have spotted a new brand of bootlegging. Of course the American—or perhaps the human being—is a born bootlegger. He will find the primrose path to profit around any law that a legislator can invent to govern his behavior. Under the Agricultural Adjustment Act the flour miller or processor must pay a processing tax on all the wheat he buys. But farmers are permitted to have a sufficient quantity of flour for their own consumption needs milled from their own wheat. How much flour does a farmer need for his own purposes? And how much flour does he actually consume? In any case, it is said in La Salle Street, the farmers are taking their wheat to the mills in their neighborhoods, having it made into flour without processing taxes, and selling that flour in their neighborhoods in competition with the millers who do pay processing taxes. The quantity in the case of each farmer is small. But taken altogether it is quite a bit and may, possibly, grow into a very large amount. Well, why not? The farmer has been bootlegging gasoline in those states where he is permitted to buy tax-free gasoline for farm use.

If there is in Chicago some somnolent person who dropped into peaceful slumber back in the gorgeous twenties and awoke in election week, 1934, it would, I am sure, be difficult to convince him that he was not still sleeping through a hideous nightmare. The election has just about completed the work of devastation for that collection of cocky leaders who sat on top of this strange mixture of squalor and brilliance and ruled it back there in the days of Calvin Coolidge and Big Bill Thompson. In this rock-ribbed Republican state the election was a massacre, but the most interesting feature was the magnificent squirt of Flit that swept Fred Britten out of Congress, just about the last of the old guard to be dislodged. Never was there a city so bereft of its old leaders. It had three great bankers —Melvin Traylor, Charlie Dawes and George R. Reynolds. Where are they? Traylor, easily the best of the lot, is dead. Poor Dawes, once Vice President of the United States, is rattling around in a huge bank building nursing a bank that exists by the grace of the United States government. Reynolds, head of the other great bank, the Continental, is out in California on short rations soothing his leisure with remembrance of the great days. Big Bill Thompson, the autocratic mayor, is so much out of things that his name was never once mentioned in the campaign. Len Small, Thompson's Governor, has passed utterly out of the picture. And what of the promoters and investment bankers? Well, Halsey, Stuart—the biggest of them—are sitting in the Federal Court on trial and beside them sits the greatest of all the moguls of Chicago, Mr. Samuel Insull, once almost the city's dictator, on trial for his vast adventures. And there are plenty more sitting there with them—lawyers, a merchant prince, bankers who once dictated elections, managed high society and ruled finance with an autocratic hand. Over on the Stock Exchange they stand around in utter idleness wondering what is to happen to them. And can anyone who can remember La Salle Street back in 1929 see this portentous tranquillity without wondering with them? Here is a city that must find a wholly new set of leaders. And, of course, she has not found them yet.

One hears strange talk among business men in the Middle West these days. For a long time there was a mood of much tolerance for the President. More recently, with the vanishing of hopes for great things from N.R.A. and under the leadership of the empties who formed the Liberty League, that mood changed to almost complete bewilderment. There have been a few highly vocal critics of the New Deal, but they have been chiefly among financiers or those closely allied with financiers. Underneath, among business men primarily interested in their various industries, there has remained a somewhat restrained but nevertheless definite feeling that, after all, the New Deal has been trying to do something for business. They like particularly the President's frequent insistence on price raising. Since the election this feeling has become more fixed in their minds and some of the more important business leaders are coming to the conviction that the Republican Party is so completely routed that all hope of getting anything there is vain.

After all, business has done pretty well in Washington. And it could have done a good deal better had it been more astute. As the months go by, as Congress reveals itself as more and more radical, as the clamor for spending rises and the agitation for inflation grows, and as the President begins to stand out, not only as the most temperate of the spenders and a foe of inflation, but also as being in favor of price fixing and profits, it seems fairly clear that, more and more, business is going to move in on the administration. In other words, I now look for a very clearly defined movement by business, big and little, and particularly big, to ally itself with Roosevelt and influence his policies to an even greater degree than it has in the past.

If this takes place we shall see a drift of the liberal and radical elements to a third party and beyond a doubt the rallying point for that movement will be the La Follettes and their Progressive Party in Wisconsin. Few outside of that state know the importance of the magnificent victory won by Bob and Phil La Follette. Without funds, with forty-seven out of the forty-nine newspapers of Wisconsin fighting them with every kind of abuse and misrepresentation, with little but their own ability, they have won an amazing triumph.

Newspaper stories of how they were elected because of the President's approval are just so much bunk. The President's approval was a watery and meaningless gesture. But the Democratic organization, which the President heads and personally manages through Farley, used every weapon in its power to defeat the La Follettes. The familiar use of the relief benefits, the most dastardly, underhanded methods, such as telling people on relief that if the Democrats lost their relief would be cut off, were aimed at these two courageous fighters. I was in Milwaukee a few nights before the election. I met both Bob and Phil in their hotel. Bob, his voice almost gone from making half a dozen or

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more speeches a day, looking bedraggled and weary, had just come in from a meeting that almost did not take place because there was no money to pay for the hall. That they won, against the united opposition of both Democratic and Republican machines and the most flagrant use of the President's patronage, the consolidated assault of press, financial and business interests, is a fact that the believers in a third party will do well to ponder. The La Follettes must have gone about it the right way. JOHN T. FLYNN.

From Cabbages to Kingpins

IT IS always hard to say just what the month's tendencies are in movies, because they come down in such droves. You may go to fifteen or twenty, but what have you seen, you haven't seen the half. It is fairly easy to see what is going on where the producers are spending the most money, however. A while back the emphasis seemed to be on meaningfulness: what is the world we live in, what is life, how is a baby, etc. This is unfortunate and no need of going into it. But now the tide is turned in favor of comedy, and this is where Hollywood's ships come in, though heaven knows there are plenty of them about as seaworthy as a wrought-iron gate.

"Mrs. Wiggs of the Cabbage Patch" will do to illustrate a trend in humor that we might be happy to see the last of: it is in the smile-with-a-tear tradition, all so beastly clean and wholesome. Heroism in the face of obstacles. Obstacles in the face of heroism. Everything. Strangely enough, in execution it does not live up to the first reports, which said something about Mr. Taurog had to go around in a gas-mask from the first take, even its own director. Pauline Lord does as much as she can with Mrs. Wiggs, and that is quite a lot. ZaSu Pitts and W. C. Fields make their parts of it even enjoyable. But wrapped up in the center of everything is the main theme, which is vicious to just such an extent as it is made believable. All about how the little Wiggsies wouldn't have any turkey feathers to put in the Thanksgiving stew, and the mother said, Well we ought to be thankful for what we've got; and how bad Mr. Bagley was just foreclosing on the house when up stands young John Longwallet with all the necessary, etc. Poverty with a basket lunch. A nasty all's-right-with-the-world burlesque of poverty, with emotions to tug at such heartstrings as are worn dangling from the mouth.

Mrs. Wiggs, of course, is the worst specimen in the heart-throb department. "What Every Woman Knows" is quite another thing, one of these romantic comedies with a plot and motivations, and reason in everything. Mr. Gregory LaCava and his writers left the play pretty much in its original unlively junks, and then tacked on their own improvisations—parallel action, trains running, out-of-town sequences, and everything pointed up, and the humor of the three brothers plugged nearly to death. The result is a rather long and tedious and mediocre film. Helen Hayes is intelligent and sweet in her part and Brian Aherne takes the usual Barrie jigger of charm and human quality off neat, and Lucille Watson is funny, and there are several touching situations, and nothing is really bad, and all. But somehow there is nothing very good either; too moderate and unrelieved. One of the reasons for this is Barrie and his main assumption (this sexless deification of women) and his sentiment, which is emasculated in the high points and rings true only in a narrow middle register. So sweet, so clean; so mildly true and complete useless.

The movies might have still done a better job on this play, taking it apart to see what made it run and then writing a new story in screen terms; but they are at a disadvantage in the case of a thing so ready-made. Matters shape up much better where they can take the idea of "The Merry Widow," and write a lot of gags and comedy parts into it quite independent of the story. Maurice Chevalier's part is frankly tailored to fit him, and loses nothing by it. The kingdom (Marshavia, I think) may not have been very large, but I should say that to have jumped out of every window in it and come off as gay and unscathed as he was able, is something. Chevalier's gifts are not too rangy, but he can balance more ladies on the point of a French accent than might be thought possible, and Ernst Lubitsch has handled him here to best advantage. Parts were also made for Edward Everett Horton, Una Merkel, Sterling Holloway, Donald Meek and George Barbier. These characters, together with the flash of delightful mummery in which Lubitsch seems occasionally able to set them off against each other, may or may not have contributed to the main theme; it doesn't matter. The main theme of misunderstood devotion was the only thing about it that wasn't merry, with the exception of Jeanette MacDonald, the widow herself. *She* wasn't gay, she was as clean as a whistle, she had a pretty bad time; and so, during her minutes on the screen, did I. But take out the story and the lady love and you still have all this fine froth and antic, more fun in an evening than you'd really care to quarrel with.

"The Pursuit of Happiness" is the sort of screen play that would have been stillborn if it had not been for Francis Lederer, who is so irresponsible and direct and charming in a rather happily created part that we might yet forgive all; and "Evelyn Prentice" started off like good comedy (on account of Una Merkel) and then worked up to a passable though hollow trial-scene affair. But what really should be saved till last is "The Gay Divorcée," which has an inconsequential situation of a woman's changing husbands in midstream. Here, for the first three quarters, is a movie that is really made. I don't know how closely (not too closely, at least) Mark Sandrich has followed the original play, but his picture certainly gets around, with Edward Everett Horton, Alice Brady and Eric Blore turning in more incidental comedy than you can find time to laugh at, Fred Astaire hoofing it about very jauntily and wisecracks coming to the surface like bubbles in fizzwater. Unfortunately it was found necessary to put a back-breaking ensemble number in the last quarter of it, the producers figuring to eat "It Happened One Night" and have their "Footlight Parade" too; but up to this point it was heading to be one of the smoothest comedies of the year. A true kingpin and hard to describe. It shifts from place to place, from comedy to dance patterns, it steps along briskly and you don't care toward what end. And that is the essence, I should say, of good Hollywood comedy: it keeps going, but not towards anything; a triumph of intelligent placing and technical skill, and not a thing on its mind.

OTIS FERGUSON.

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Tragic and American

FOR A third time within a year we rise to remark a new work by Roy Harris, for the reason that three times within a year the young American composer has presented us with new, authentic and notable pieces of music, and the latest of them completely rekindles the enthusiasm aroused by its predecessors, the Concerto and the Sextet. The "Symphony: 1933"[1] is probably the most momentous of them all; even though, like its predecessors, it is not an impeccable work, its last part wanting much of the intrinsic musical interest of the pungent first and second movements, and its form occasionally displaying awkwardness. But the value of works of art, in the words of some wise Frenchman, doesn't derive from their freedom from defects, but from their comprehension of positive qualities; and the new symphony abounds in virtues. Harris' individually rugged and melancholy and warm idiom appears more purely in it than in the Sextet; and there it is relatively unmixed. The melodic lines of the symphony, austerely modal, attain considerable lengthiness and, in many passages, epical sweep. The values flowing from the relation of note to note are frequently larger here than in any of the composer's earlier pieces. And with its contrasted contrapuntal, variously polyphonic forms, the work transmits an integral and original vision.

It is a tragic vision—the first of its kind, according to Dr. Koussevitzky, that has been conveyed by an American symphonist. The piece begins with a wildly percussive motive recalling, with its irregular rhythms, the excited mood and gestures of some Celtic bard. The heroic, rugged, abruptly accented, almost guttural—and curiously American—first theme, makes its appearance in the windy horns; and its marchlike progress on the horns and trombones conveys to us the content of the rhapsode's song. It is the spirit of "adventure and physical exuberance"; and the peculiar movement, the epic and homely American quality of the expression, momentarily conjures up before us the picture of an American caravan impetuously pressing forward, to the cracking of whips and the cries and jocosities of teamsters, into new Western territory. The picture quickly fades as the music grows more abstract. Still, the agitated developments of the material clearly continue to sing and celebrate the spirit of the pioneer. But with the movement's middle section, the marchlike rhythm dies away. The music seems to reflect the feeling of limitless distance, and moods of baffled spiritual aspiration begin to govern it; and in the long Coda, the mood is already predominantly tragic. And the second, the main part of the symphony, is entirely pathetic and solemn in character, conveying with its subdued plangent tones and somber color, its brooding, alternately stern and tender figures, some young, new sense of the dark end of human aspiration and endeavor: in Harris' own words, "the pathos which seems to underlie all human existence." Doubtless, if we look into this reserved and moving expression of protracted sorrow, we shall find it eloquent of the hereditary melancholy of the northern peoples, and a mirror of the old experience of the "lone prairie" on which the composer was born. But we shall also find it eloquent of some new and more universal experience, and one which, taking a hint from the symphony's subtitle, we may safely identify with the experience, the national experience, of the last years. This music sings a symphony with the spirit of "adventure and physical exuberance," modified by a fresh acquaintance with and compassion for man's destiny; and that is the mood of an America matured by its own disappointment and grief. And the last movement of the work slowly, as by an intense effort, mounts to a new brief expression of faith.

The records themselves, made during the Carnegie Hall production of the piece by the Boston orchestra last February 2, are wonderfully clear. As all musicians know, February and the first performances of idiomatically strange new works are the classic occasions for coughs indicative of the distress of the audiences. But these plates show that on the night of February 2 only one cough jarred Carnegie Hall; and that that one was discreet and unwilling, and reverberated toward the conclusion of the intricate and long and melancholy slow movement. No registration of applause could be more happily significant than that of this hesitant little interruption. PAUL ROSENFELD.

[1] Columbia Masterworks Set No. 191. Roy Harris: Symphony: 1933. Dr. Serge Koussevitsky and the Boston Symphony Orchestra. In seven parts on four twelve-inch records. $6.

CORRESPONDENCE

More Challenges to Liberty

SIR: In connection with the arrest of thirteen Communists in Atlanta on charges of inciting to insurrection and owning communist literature, I learn from a friend there that Liberty Magazine is included in the evidence against the suspects. The friend adds "Any book with 'liberty' on the front of it is bound to be radical, says the chief of police."

New York City. HENRY HART.

Marx and David Markand

SIR: Here is a letter in which Waldo Frank fairly presents his objections to my review of his new novel, published in the issue of October 17.

New York City. MALCOLM COWLEY.

[ENCLOSURE]

Dear Malcolm Cowley:

I have almost never made direct replies to reviews of my books. But since you have chosen to quarrel with "The Death and Birth of David Markand" on almost purely ideological grounds, as if it were a modern "Pilgrim's Progress," and since the philosophy which your criticism implies is not alone common among our intellectual radicals, but, I am convinced, dangerous to the cause of social revolution—to the cause of a *humane* world—which we both cherish, I feel that I should break my rule.

You find in my story "something discordant" which you analyze as "the contrast between mysticism and communism." You object to Markand's coming to his revolutionary faith by a personal route, which you call analogous to religious conversion. "There has been a great deal of argument," you continue, "on the subject of whether communism is a religion . . . but there is one thing certain: it is not that kind of religion." And you sum up by saying that I try "to make a working agreement between mysticism and realism, between Spinoza and Marx, between 'Pilgrim's Progress' and the proletariat, and the two sides won't be reconciled."

But you do not define your antithesis of the "mystic" and the "real" which, as you use them, are mere unchallenged *idées reçues* of a decadent Protestant culture, and utterly alien to every event and implication of my novel. It is as if you said: "Man cannot live on both air and earth, he must choose"; and invented for your purpose an unimaginable fellow flying about in the stratosphere

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and another, just as incredible, grubbing in the subsoil, whereas of course man cannot live except by *both* air and earth. Your antithesis of Marx and Spinoza is equally untrue. The teachings of Marx (and he was the first to be forced to say in despair: 'I am no Marxist!') are in deep part an assumption, a development, a concretion, of Spinoza. And your opposition of "Pilgrim's Progress" and the proletariat is misleading. Bunyan's book is the story of man's deepest personal problem in the terms of a certain culture; and your opposition implies that the proletariat does not consist of persons—persons who also have problems individual and inward, the solution of which integrally affects their social behavior.

You reveal, even more plainly, your dualistic and mechanistic notion of social action when you say: "communism is not *a state of being;* it is a way of achieving certain ends by uniting and working hard for them." Never have more dangerous words been printed in The New Republic! How can ends be achieved except by men who are in a certain "state of being"? Any cogent plan of action implies and requires a state of being intense and organic. Unawares, you have accepted the sterile figment of the "economic man" which was invented by our enemies, the bourgeois utilitarians who had a reason for ignoring the existence of personal human beings, since they wanted to justify poverty and child labor. Their capitalism is a "state of being." And communism, which seeks to transfigure the motives and values of man under capitalism, must, to succeed, also be a state of being. It must be a revolution of the inward man, which only a false antithesis opposes to the traits of social action. And it is precisely this counterpoint between the two developments toward world change: the inward-personal and the social-economic, that makes up the symphonic structure of my novel.

Markand, you say, finds a "new faith . . . the militant socialism of 1917 (in 1934 it would have been communism)." Hence you quarrel with me for letting him leave the strikers in order to go home. You seem to imply that the task of world revolution has only one dimension: that of direct action on the field of labor. Such action is, of course, a basic part of the work, and a part which must for functional reasons, perhaps, exclusively appeal to the agitator. But to find it regarded by you as *the whole* is appalling! Markand accepts no such simplistic faith as you would give him. He is the kind of man who must solve certain inward problems (call them "personal" or call them "religious"), before he can be released into social action. He is aware of *his inadequacy* until he has solved these problems. And his bitter determination to solve them makes you call him "selfish." Yet these problems happen to be the very ones whose lack of solution is holding up the revolutionary movement—both intellectual and labor—despite the ever more menacing world crisis!

One more point. You call me a writer "too proud to acknowledge . . . that he has changed his philosophy in recent years." Here you remind me of a man color-blind to all except one color, trying to judge a picture whose composition is built in part upon other colors which you cannot see, so that obviously you cannot "see the picture." In 1919 I closed my book, "Our America," with these words: *In a dying world, creation is revolution.* I have adhered to this thesis. You believe it to be changed only because you implicitly assume that my espousal of "revolution" must somehow bar the full meaning, as I see it, of "creation." Now this would be unimportant, if you were merely an individual speaking of a writer in a way that seemed to him unjust. Unfortunately, in your attitude you lead a majority of the intellectual radicals of our day and nation. But there is a minority who *know* that the dualism and mechanolatry buried in your definitions must be exhumed and destroyed before communism is fit for its destined work: to replace the inhuman and subpersonal "state of being" called capitalism by a state of being that will be the dawn of a human culture. Your assumptions about "mysticism," "religion," "conversion of the inward man," etc., are unrealistic, because they do not dissociate what is cogent in these human experiences from the vast theological impedimenta. And this is serious, because it bars so many American Marxists from that knowledge and full control of reality which are the premise of revolutionary action. What is needed, it seems to me, is the organic sense of life. Marx had it, and Lenin. And until this sense has become naturalized by an American generation, Marxism will not begin to function in the United States as it is functioning in Russia and in China. But when that generaton comes, I am sure, the legend of the groping David Markand will be understood, and the esthetic harmony of the Markand novel will be accepted.

New York City. WALDO FRANK.

[Marx would never have subscribed to the statement that a man like David Markand "must solve certain inward problems . . . *before* he can be released into social action." He believed, on the contrary, that "the solution of theoretical contradictions," including such inward problems as Markand faced, "is possible only by practical means, by man's practical energy." He believed that "all social life is essentially practical. All the mysteries that lead theory astray into mysticism find their rational solution in human activity (praxis) and in the understanding of this activity." But my review of "David Markand" wasn't intended to be a discussion of Marxist principles, about which I know less than I should. My aim was simply to judge an admirable novel in which, nevertheless, I felt an inner disharmony. I tried to define the causes of it. The definition was brief and possibly mistaken, but the disharmony remains.—M. C.]

An Author's Correction

SIR: I mistakenly referred to "the Belloli preface" in my review of Frieda Lawrence's "Not I, But the Wind" [The New Republic, October 24]. This was due to the fact that I had been reading the privately printed edition of the book. The Viking Press trade edition omits this preface, author and publisher having apparently agreed with me that it was "perfectly superfluous," and the book is, therefore, by that much better than I reported it.

Santa Fé, N. M. PHILIP STEVENSON.

The Late Doings at Albany

SIR: . . . I went to Albany as a representative of the Associated Office and Professional Emergency Employees, an organization of white-collar workers on relief projects. Arriving at the Albany meeting place with twenty-two other delegates from various organizations, the morning after the "battle at the bridge," I and my companions were ordered, to the tune of a good deal of cursing, to leave the city immediately. We scattered, and two of us walked down the road toward New York to see the hunger marchers, who, during the night, had been driven this far, with clubs beating on their heads, shoulders and legs.

In a little declivity, dubbed by them "Lehman's Hole," we saw them. Blood was still trickling from the heads of some of them. On others the blood had caked down the sides of their faces, on their glasses and over their clothes. One man sixty-seven years old lay moaning, having been beaten so badly that he could not move. With two or three bonfires giving the only warmth, they had spent the cold night on the hard ground. The medical man accompanying the marchers, who was not allowed by the police to attend those beaten on the bridge, had himself received concussions on the elbow and shoulders.

Two of us returned to town to see if we could get some aid. We had no sooner crossed the Albany bridge than we were set upon by eight or ten individuals who asked our names and then punched us in the jaw before we could finish answering. They began dragging us to a nearby garage. Not knowing who these men were we refused to enter the garage. No sooner had I refused than three of them hit me, all at the same time, in the jaw, behind the ear and in the stomach, and grabbing both of us by the collar dragged us into the garage. Cursing wildly they pushed us around, apparently attempting to get us to resist. They tired in five minutes and called the police wagon. Only then did we know that we had been greeted by the Albany detectives.

We were taken to jail, kept there for the rest of the day, refused permission to see anyone, let alone a lawyer, and finally told that we "needn't hang around the jail any longer." . . .

New York City. OSCAR R. FUSS.

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Cuban Pageant

The Pageant of Cuba, by Hudson Strode. New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas. 357 pages. $3.

MR. HUDSON STRODE, like the rest of us, has undoubtedly heard of those fifteenth-century maps in the Vatican on which Cuba or some neighbor is listed as an unnamed land. And we have all heard of that Piccolomini pope's book, some decades before Columbus, in which he begins by saying that it is generally believed by men the earth is round. Mr. Strode knows also, I am sure, that the Great Navigator, meaning Christopher Columbus, was not much of a navigator at all but a tradesman rather, with some interior spirit magnificently possessive, high, oblique and insatiable. But in this history of Cuba Mr. Strode ignores any previous dubiety. He takes the precocious Cristoforo, eldest son of the Genoese wool-comber Colombo, as entering the University of Pavia at the age of ten and shining in those branches of learning for which that institution was distinguished, "natural philosophy, geography and astrology." From those three years of attendance we pass, what with time and Queen Isabella, to that entrance into Western harbors, lands which Columbus, by the way, described afterwards in terms, or shall we say lies, by which they have remained forever unidentifiable. And so we come to the islands, and among them Cuba, the scene of our history, though Christopher fancied it to be the Cipango of Marco Polo, that island of gold and pearls and spices, lying at the outer edge of the unknown sea.

This process is quite right and it is right to leave out whatever Columbian controversies there may be. The island, so far as we are concerned, properly begins with these sailing ships. The engaging fascination of this book of Mr. Strode's includes these sails, these men that seemed to come from heaven, this glamorous, golden land where the palm trees were so abundant, the ardent air sweet with the scent of strange flowers and the song of bright-plumaged birds unlike those of Spain, and where humming birds darted among the blossoms "like animated particles of the rainbow." The distant mountains, Columbus wrote in his journal, were like Sicily and the land the most beautiful that human eyes had ever beheld.

From this point "The Pageant of Cuba" moves steadily forward. We have quotations from Las Casas, from Columbus' own records, and from records here and there; we have the tropic night, the festivals of the natives, the plants, customs and fortunes of the island, and then the cruelty of the invaders; until as time passed the Cubaños had been extinguished and African slavery come in. Meantime, they had been practising through many generations the religion of the Nazarene, of whom they had not heard until Columbus spoke of Him. He told them that this was the true religion and that his sovereigns at home in Spain had sent him to tell them about it. He promised to send priests to teach them the glorious blessings of this religion "to protect them from harm and injury." Eighteen years later, true to this promise, Christians came bringing the "light of a religion that had just evolved the Inquisition." With unmitigated rigor the Spaniards began to save the Cubaños "from the darkness of their happy ignorance." Time was to see these natives, as Las Casas wrote in his "General History of the Indies"—a chronicle of matters so horrible that he ordered the manuscript not to be printed until forty years after his death—fleeing and then returning, "men and women like sheep, each with his little bundle of poverty upon his back," and, always, bearing gifts for the invaders. This, of course, was before they had ceased to be seen at all any more.

By a curious ironical parallel this first history of Cuba, jeweled and passionate and easy land, provides the myth for the rest of the island's history. You have only to read Mr. Strode's book with its pungent comment and facile junctures and transitions to see that it repeats its pattern later on. The first Spanish governors, the English pirates and marauders, the buccaneers and then later Tacón, Placido, the mulatto poet, and Lopez, the revolts and revolutions, the American attitudes and policies, the Spanish-American War, with our American jingo press, the free Cuba under Estrada Palma, the blunders of Taft and Magoon, and finally the American millions pouring into Cuba, the later presidents, and the flourishes of Machado, with the reigns of terror—all this repeats the rich, ironical and passionate fantasy of the island's earlier history.

No brief review could convey, of course, the wide burden of these facts which Mr. Strode with such patience, sarcasm, vividness and sympathy has set down. It seems more profitable to reflect on what there is in racial psychologies that makes us feel superior and humorous toward a sun-burnt island, luxurious and alive, founded on a Latin basis, like Cuba. For example, President Menocal in the nine months preceding election pardoned 335 criminals, including 44 murderers, "in order to use them as gunmen and bullies and to get the value of their family influence." To split the Negro vote, which was overwhelmingly Liberal, a feud between hostile factions of the Negro secret sects was revived, and to those who espoused the Conservative cause they proposed to allow the privilege of dancing the *ñañigos* and the *congas,* voodoo and orgiastic sexual dances, in the streets. When Zayas died the funeral procession ran two miles, and in his admirers' fight for the honor of bearing his coffin one man was killed, scores wounded.

On the other hand, it seems to me that I have heard in certain states of our Union, at certain times, of numerous pardons for mere bribes. I believe I have also read of how our government let one of the army men who risked his life in the yellow-fever experiment in Cuba, through which he became a paralytic, go for years with nothing, then with $12 a month pension and then, a long time afterwards, a grant of $100 a month. When Gorgas died in England, soon after having been knighted by King George, who came to visit him in the hospital, he was given a magnificent state funeral in Saint Paul's Cathedral; when he was buried at our Arlington his family, none too rich, in Alabama had to scrape up the money to buy a modest slab. I have not, among our various spendings, heard of two millions wasted on a national theatre to which was attached a club where men of all classes might pay two dollars a month for card-rooms, billiard-rooms, ball-rooms, and medical, surgical and hospital attention.

Mr. Strode conveys the innate pageantry of the island's life, trusting to the persuasion of his material and to the creative unity of his imagination.

STARK YOUNG.

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BOOKS IN REVIEW

Former Fugleman

RECENTLY there appeared two items concerning H. L. Mencken, and I wish that somebody would explain them. Taken together, they don't make sense.

Item 1. The Modern Library has reprinted Scott Fitzgerald's best novel, "The Great Gatsby." It is a book whose unique value has been overestimated by many people, including T. S. Eliot, Rebecca West and its own author, but nevertheless it is a fine piece of work, a sentimental poem to the Jazz Age that I was glad to reread in 1934; it hasn't staled or withered. The item about Mencken appears in the preface to the new edition. Here Fitzgerald gives a round scolding to the present race of critics and says that there is no one today who goes to the trouble of discovering and guiding able but unknown novelists, as Mencken used to do in Smart Set and in the early days of The American Mercury. And it is perfectly true that Mencken not only engineered the success of Dreiser, and helped to put Lewis across, but also had a share in the humbler triumphs of several talented writers who followed them. He wasn't in many cases the real discoverer; somebody else usually performed that function; but Mencken was the only critic out of blinkers who was widely read by people under thirty. He was, to use one of his favorite words, the fugleman of the new fiction.

Item 2. To the October 6 issue of The Saturday Review, Mencken himself contributed an article on proletarian writers. A great many of the able young novelists who have appeared during the last three or four years belong to this category. It happens that the literary and human value of their work has been persistently undervalued by critics who don't like their politics. It also happens that the worst attacks against them have appeared in journals which Mencken used to despise for being stodgy. Therefore, on the face of the record, we might expect that he would now come to their defense, would praise them immoderately in order to restore the balance in their favor, would shout and prod and bludgeon a little sense into the heads of the Tory reviewers. This is the sort of thing he used to do often. If he had done it again, the two items would agree, and that would be the end of it.

On the contrary, he takes the side of the stodgier critics. He tries to make us believe that all proletarian novelists are dull beyond description and are writing about factory hands and farmers only because they tried and failed to break into The Cosmopolitan with Cinderella stories. He doesn't stop there, unfortunately. He also implies that most proletarian writers are Jews, even though many of them sign their work with "distinguished (albeit largely bogus) Anglo-Saxon names." It is curious how this thread of anti-Semitism runs through his essay. He talks about young men who "took to religion and declared themselves High Church Episcopalians—despite, in many cases, inconvenient surgical evidence to the contrary." Like Reichsbischoff Müller of the German State Church, he evidently believes that nobody is entitled to be a Christian unless he can prove that all four grandparents were Aryans. Mencken speaks of novels "too often done in English that seems to be a bad translation from the Yiddish." In Hitler's Germany there is a movement to prohibit all Jews from writing in any language except Yiddish or Hebrew, on the ground that they have been corrupting German taste and style. This critic who used to think for himself now writes as if he were making a free translation from a pamphlet by Dr. Joseph Goebbels.

And the voice of Goebbels rings even louder at the end of this essay. Mencken suggests that the whole radical movement could be ended suddenly by the declaration of another war—in twenty-four hours all the proletarians would be patriots. Or else, he continues, "on some rather remoter tomorrow, the cops may turn Nazi and get out of hand, and prudence may suddenly consume the passion for Service, as in 1917. There is, indeed, never much heroism in literati." But I don't enjoy this blowing of warlike trumpets by a Baltimore gentleman of sedentary habits who has passed the age for military service. And the physical courage of the literati is not a question of vast importance. I can't remember that Mencken himself has done anything bolder than what H. G. Wells describes Frank Harris as doing—that is, to "sit and talk exuberantly in imminent danger of unanswerable contradiction."

It is true that he avoids some of this danger, in the present essay, by naming no names. He never tells us just which writers he is attacking (nor, for that matter, does he say anything to prove that he knows the work of any proletarian writer whatever). But it would be better to give him the benefit of the doubt. Let us assume that he has actually read some proletarian novelists and that, being fair-minded, he is choosing as target the best or most prominent of those who have appeared during the last two or three years. In that case he is writing about Robert Cantwell (this being the *nom de plume* or pseudonym of a young man from the state of Washington who was christened Robert Cantwell); he is writing about William Rollins (the pseudonym of William Rollins), Grace Lumpkin (the pseudonym of Grace Lumpkin), Albert Halper (the pseudonym of Albert Halper), Jack Conroy (the pseudonym of Jack Conroy) and Fielding Burke (the pseudonym of Olive Tilford Dargan). There is one bogus name in the list of six. There is also one Jew, but the Jew writes under his own name. As a matter of fact, Jewish writers have not particularly distinguished themselves in this particular type of fiction, for reasons that have nothing to do with racial genius or literary talent. Most proletarian novels deal with the struggles of workers in the basic industries. There is not a high proportion of Jews in these industries, and honest writers of any race prefer to deal with subjects they know at first hand.

How much does Mencken know about proletarian novels? He says they are amateurish, preposterous and written in shaky English. Well, in all the books by all the authors I have mentioned, there is not so much downright bad writing, not so much English that sounds like a fancy translation from the Polish, Coptic or Aramean, as there is in any chapter of Joseph Hergesheimer, whom Mencken regards as a fine stylist. He conjectures that the chief charm of proletarian fiction "to those who can endure it at all, is probably the flavor of pornography that is in most of it." Well, there are several proletarian novelists who use coarse language—and rather too much of it for my own studious taste—but in all their books there is not enough real pornography to butter thin a single page of "Jurgen." If I remember correctly, Mencken was one of those who worked hardest to rescue "Jurgen" from the censor.

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No, there is some deep and strange disparity between Item 1 and Item 2, between the atheistic, censor-baiting, freedom-roaring Mencken of 1920 and the pious God-and-Pierpont-Morgan-fearing Mencken of these depression years. Something is gnawing at his vitals, and it would take a surgeon, a psychoanalyst, two Marxian critics and an investment banker sitting in conference to diagnose the disease from which the man now suffers. He has nightmares and delusions. He starts up from an uneasy sleep to cry that the country is going to the dogs and that Stalin himself is in the White House. He summons the cops and the censors to his bedside to protect him from pornography. After ten years spent fighting the Ku Kluxers and making himself feared by kleagles and wizards, he is ready to swallow the nostrums of Imperial Wizard Hitler and Grand Dragon Goebbels. And he has lost his appetite for good writing. There was a time when Mencken the critic used to praise young novelists and Mencken the editor used to print their work, even though he suspected them of being Jewish or radical or stony broke. But the critic and the editor are dead now, and their clothes are too big for Mencken the politician. MALCOLM COWLEY.

Folksong in America

American Ballads and Folksongs, by John A. Lomax and Alan Lomax. New York: The Macmillan Company. 625 pages. $5.

WHAT HAS distinguished Professor Lomax's work from the first has been his emphasis upon native elements in our folksong. He excludes from this collection the Scottish and English ballads, of which folklorists have always inclined to make too much, and insists that the dance tunes of the Southern mountains are "a more integral part of American culture than ever were the American versions of the Child ballads." The breadth of that culture is proved afresh by his wide inclusions of play-party songs, blues, creole, *vaquero* and minstrel songs, ballads of the lumber camp and the range, songs of the cotton plantations, levee camps and Negro chain gangs. His collection is an extraordinarily living thing rather than an assemblage of quaint, odd or lovely relics. The breath of life comes in part from an unerring choice of songs that have passion or complaint, drama or lyric surprise. Professor Lomax has drawn directly from the sources of folksong for more than twenty-five years, in Texas, Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Louisiana, Mississippi as well as in other sections. He has even heard folksongs in the making. On a large cotton plantation he asked for "made-up" songs and a Negro who misunderstood the request composed a satire on the overseer of a type that would inevitably be appropriated as folksong.

Probably the most novel discoveries revealed here are songs of Negroes on plantations, levees and in prison camps of the South. These make a whole racial, emotional outpouring—the songs of mule-skinners, cotton pickers, woodchoppers, songs about Negroes hunted by a sheriff and bloodhounds, about days in prison looking out at passers-by, about days when women come and "Shorty George," a train, takes them away again, or about "jumping Judy"—"jumping" being applied to the way prisoners work in the fields when driven by an angry captain. Some of the songs were sung to the Lomaxes by two women, Dink and Bat, many of them by men prisoners—Scrap Iron, Can't Make It, Butter Ball, Steam Shovel, Barrel House, Creepin' Jesus, and others whose names were poetic disguises. Recently critical opinion seems to have been inclining toward the view that the Negro songs are mainly derivative. A reading of this collection will upset that view. The musical and poetical idioms are marked, and the scope and variation and emotional power immense. Professor Lomax believes that the Negro has created the greatest number and the most distinctive of our folksongs.

Probably for a full appropriation such songs and ballads must be widely heard as sung by their original possessors, either on records or over the air—barring the chance to hear them directly. The basic manner of American ballad singing is often far removed from the romantic modern style of the ordinary singer. But the materials for a "singing book" are here in an abundance comparable only to that of Sandburg's "American Songbag" and including a very large number of songs hitherto unknown. In most instances the tunes are given, and Professor Lomax shares the experiences of the collector with great freshness and charm. People, scenes and ways of existence come to life in his running sketches. He uncompromisingly states that these songs belong to literature, and so they do, because of their lyric and narrative distinction and the immediacy of life that shines through them. At some not too distant time they may seem more important in our literary annals than the effusions of the Hartford Wits or the sketches of the Knickerbocker School. Meanwhile they offer a great amount of sheer enjoyment for singing or half-musical reading. CONSTANCE ROURKE.

Tolstoy's Daughter

I Worked for the Soviet, by Countess Alexandra Tolstoy. New Haven: Yale University Press. 252 pages. $3.

THE TITLE of this book is, to say the least, an exaggeration. Tolstoy's daughter worked rather in spite of the Soviet, until 1929. Then she found that she could "lie no more" and, supposedly on a censored lecture tour to Japan, she came to the United States where she is still waiting for the end of Bolshevism. Being saturated with her father's philosophy of pacifism, good works and Christian humility, she was naturally opposed to the violence of the Revolution and the inevitable bigotries of the U.S.S.R., but she is not thinker enough to engage in a battle of concepts. Her criticism of the new regime is based on personal dislikes and isolated examples of stupidity. She upholds her own position with all the security of an inherited system of conduct. Countess Tolstoy regrets the lost grace of living: this is apparently all her sense of history. In 1917 she worked in a hospital at the front and was appalled by the growing disrespect of soldiers for their commanders. She does not mention that these soldiers, workers, had been told that they were pawns for foreign capital and were beginning to believe it. Returning to the Tolstoy estate, Yasnaia Poliana, she finds that "thieves" have taken some of her household goods. "Nothing interested me; nothing was mine." This was when the peasants, skeptical of the long promises of the Kerensky government, were settling the agrarian problem in the only way known to them, by force. History had not time to mourn for the old mine and thine.

Nevertheless there is more in the book than the usual impressions of a disgruntled aristocrat. The author is no hypocrite, and she did not give up easily. She carried on educational and relief work in prison, where she was held for no particular reason. Under government supervision she established [illegible]

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Tolstoy estate, trying to preserve the place as a monument to her father's idealism. Her understanding of peasants and fellow-prisoners is that of an artist. She illustrates the tragedy of philanthropy trickling into an old stream-bed.

ELEANOR CLARK.

The New Deal's Right Hand Man

The New Democracy, by Harold L. Ickes. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. 156 pages. $1.50.

THE AUTHOR of this book is a middle-aged Chicago gentleman with a likable personality and a good deal of that queer gift of the executive to get things done—complicated in his case, however, by a preference for inaction rather than compromise with anything less than The Right and The Best. By a series of accidents he became Mr. Roosevelt's Secretary of the Interior, and because the President liked him better and better, he took on other jobs as well, until he was one of the two or three most important people in the administration. Now, with the "wise counsel and help" of Dr. Clark Foreman, he has written a book which is at once a statement of his political philosophy and a summary and defense of the New Deal. Published six weeks earlier, it might even have been called a campaign document; coming just before the zero hour of November 6, it can only be called a campaign document of 1936—if we all get as far as 1936—and by then it will be out of date.

Mr. Ickes looks about him and sees that most people are good at heart but a minority is selfish and unjust. By some odd coincidence, the good are all poor and helpless, the selfish and unjust are strong and rich. They produce shoddy goods, paying low wages and getting high prices. They steal and squander the natural resources of the country; they desecrate Chicago's lakefront or New York's shoreline; "the only law that they respect is the law of the jungle." When they demand liberty, and weep about violations of the Constitution, it is liberty to loot that they want, and an interpretation of the law which puts property rights ahead of everything else.

This being so, it is necessary for us, the good majority, to coerce the wicked few a little. They must be told by law not to sell us worthless stocks, or work us too young, or for wages too low. They must not produce too ridiculously much of anything in accordance with the possible demand. People in each industry must get together and end wasteful and unfair methods. Farm surpluses must be eliminated. Government must see to it that our economic machinery achieves the greatest good for the greatest number.

As far as I can judge after reading his book carefully, Mr. Ickes thinks that all these things have been achieved under Mr. Roosevelt, and that matters are going along just fine. To be sure, he calls it "only a beginning"; but what a beginning it has turned out to be! He repeats in detail most of the material in Mr. Donald Richberg's series of Monday-morning releases a few weeks ago. Unemployment has decreased by more than 4,000,000, labor's share in the national income has increased 4.2 percent, etc. (Hardly any of his figures are more recent than June, 1934.) True, "the average factory worker's purchasing power [has] remained practically unchanged." True, the index of production of all manufacturing establishments got up only to 72.1 percent in May, 1934, "since when there has been another recession." But these are insignificant details, minute flyspecks on a large and beautiful pumpkin pie of achievement. It is especially interesting to see that the Public Works Administrator shows hardly any consciousness of the Keynes theory of vast public works as a way out of depression. To be sure, in one place he speaks of "priming the pump"; but elsewhere, throughout the book, he talks of these enterprises either as making work, which enables the unemployed to keep their self-respect, or as a sort of national tidying up, Aunty Sam doing some continental housekeeping. There is, by the way, hardly a word about a possible vast federal program of housing, a subject on which I understand that Mr. Ickes has only very recently seen the light.

It is almost impossible, as I have said, not to feel drawn toward Mr. Ickes if you have ever met him; and it is equally hard not to admire the fine liberal spirit which animates his book. He wants everyone in this country to be prosperous and happy; and he believes that this is possible without any real fight with the propertied class, but through some sort of magical hocus-pocus composed in equal parts of moral exhortation, self-denying ordinances, and mild police regulations by the federal government. He thinks, with patent sincerity, that a good start has already been made in this direction. No wonder Mr. Roosevelt likes him.

BRUCE BLIVEN.

Happy Day

Children of the New Day, by Katherine Glover and Evelyn Dewey. New York: D. Appleton-Century Company. 332 pages. $2.25.

THIS BOOK, according to its jacket, is "the first manual of child training to take into account the revolutionary changes in economic and social life with which the children of the new day will have to contend." But the parent-study groups, for whom the book is evidently intended, need have no qualms over that adjective "revolutionary." The social changes that concern Misses Glover and Dewey are those which have been produced by the machine, the city and the importance of the mother in the family circle. And the "new civilization" they envisage for their native land is not a replica of the U.S.S.R., but the "Kingdom of God on earth for which it [America] was discovered."

They base their sanguine prophecy upon the findings of the White House Conference on Child Health and Protection that Herbert Hoover inaugurated in the halcyon month of June, 1929. And before they discuss such humdrum things as teeth, glands, vitamins, mental tests, juvenile delinquents, habits, homes and vacation camps, they assure us happily that the children of today are on "the very threshold of their rights." These rights are numerous, but among them, as quoted from President Hoover's Children's Charter, are the privilege of living in a "home environment harmonious and enriching" and of growing up "in a family with an adequate standard of living and the security of a stable income." "The beautiful children" of today, the authors assure us, are "the builders of a new kind of world." It is they "who will bring order out of confusion, and beauty out of chaos."

It is a disappointment to find Evelyn Dewey, who as a pioneer in the new education of children seemed so sane and so practical, endorsing today the bland optimism of the "creative" progressive educators who succeeded her.

GRACE ADAMS.

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While Waiting

Those Who Perish, by Edward Dahlberg. New York: The John Day Company. $2.

IN "THOSE WHO PERISH," Edward Dahlberg has written a novel that is forceful and poignant. A writer who approaches the contemporary disorders with a sensitiveness bordering on hyperesthesia, he is especially well equipped to picture the disintegration of individuals that is implicit in the disintegration of our economic structure. Dahlberg is adept at taking grotesque, harried and abysmal characters, and prodding them to become more and more themselves. The persons of his books whom he has selected for particular dislike, he pursues with a corrosive brand of comment which constantly crashes through their own concepts of their lives, like a heckler who breaks a debater's sequence at every point by shouting out unwieldly questions. Dahlberg's style is highly mannered, with a distinctiveness that can readily alienate whenever it ceases to attract. It builds an elaborate "superstructure" about his figures, somewhat as Cummings does in "The Enormous Room," where he quickly gets from the object to a gigantesque projection—but in Dahlberg's case this device seldom shows Cummings' tendency toward pure playfulness; rather, it is pained and even vengeful. Dahlberg has obviously been under great strain in this ailing society, and in his writing he is settling a score.

In fluent and natural dialogue, Dahlberg gives us an important aspect of the grim interregnum that is now upon us, when the collapsing capitalist order can provide neither moral nor material security, and no alternative has been established. We see the grave unsettlement of the Jews in America, as the Nazi movement gains power and threatens to extend its doctrines to this country. We see them, when they would turn to communism as a solution, frightened by the thought that a frank allegiance to Marxism would make them members of two minorities instead of one, and this at our present stage could but multiply their risks. Dahlberg is not a sympathetic man: he tends to excoriation rather than to pity—and even while building up this dilemma he rigorously pursues the business men and Zionists who would tend toward a fascist compromise of their own instead of electing the communistic solution and welcoming a present danger in the interests of ultimate betterment. In this respect it is questionable whether his machinery of propaganda extends so far and includes so much as the needs of strategy may demand.

Stanley Burnshaw, writing on Dahlberg's book in The New Masses, has noted that the earlier negativistic attitude exemplified in "From Flushing to Calvary" has here found its positive counterpart: "Those Who Perish," he says, does not contain merely the rejection of capitalism, it contains also the positive election of communism. I can only say that, so far as I was concerned, this turn from the negation of capitalism to the affirmation of communism seemed but sketchily embodied. Dahlberg's heroine, Regina Gordon, dies in a state of complete loneliness. A suicide, she swept out her arms toward "those who have the heart for tomorrow," whereupon she "smoldered into yesterday." The affirmation thus remains in the stage of the ideal, the prophetic, a vague and bewildered reaching out of hands toward the future as one sinks into oblivion. She salutes communism as a doctrine, but no character in this book has been pictured in connection with communism as an organization. As an isolated individual, Dahlberg's heroine has "seen the light," in much the old religious fashion of conversion. But to my mind the negation has not been imaginatively embodied as an affirmation until the artist gives us a positive picture of group coöperation and adjustment, shows us on the positive side what actual concrete solace and encouragement the Comrades can provide for one another. Meanwhile, we can proclaim Dahlberg as the possessor of a strong stylistic death-ray—and those characters upon whom his partisanship prompts him to train this ray wither before our very eyes.

KENNETH BURKE.

Permanence and the Present

Before Disaster, by Yvor Winters. Tryon, N. C.: The Tryon Pamphlets. 26 pages. 25 cents.

Horizons of Death, by Norman Macleod. New York: Parnassus Press. $1.

THESE two paper-bound books are of considerable interest to anyone who assumes that only in England are there instructed poets under forty, occupied with the present situation. Mr. Winters prefaces his small collection with a compact Foreword in explanation of his attitude. "The matter of the following verses is in the main the stress to which the permanent, or ideal, elements of the human character are subjected by the powers of disintegration, by the temptations of Hell, which though permanent in their general nature, usually take particular forms from the age." The poems themselves are deceptively simple, epigrammatic, clean: inscriptions. The form seems orthodox to the point of being academic. It is rigidly accentual-syllabic, the direct reverse of all free-verse forms: "The

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finest sensitivity is the product of the clearest form. . . . I cannot grasp the contemporary notion that the traditional virtues of style are incompatible with a poetry of modern subject matter; it appears to rest on the fallacy of expressive form, the notion that the form of the poem should express the *matter*." Hence, a series of poems oracular, exasperated, unequivocally forthright, naked of rhetoric, charged with an indignant, directed will, couched in a colorless nobility, an almost anonymous authority. The verses on Hart Crane seem final as if cut on a granite stele; monument and total biography. The fewest words, the simplest syllables, the most sober rhymes achieve a continuity of emotional tension, a calm, cold ferocity of intellect that may be more permanent than the qualities of many other hotter and more voluminous poets.

Quite the reverse is Norman Macleod's "Horizons of Death." There are many more poems in his book: there are few rhymes, and Mr. Winters would consider none of it poetry. It is dedicated "To a Bitter Age." What it lacks in formal excellence it makes up in its very real personalized, specific gravity. Often monotonous, as Whitman's line is often monotonous, like Whitman by ingenuousness it somehow absolves one from applying ordinary critical (literary) standards. However achieved, wastefully or successfully, there are in these verses the large accidents, typical of our time, of many places and living people.

These verses are phrased very often in the past tense. Their nostalgia is too vivid to be merely autobiographical. Rather the autobiography is, in a general sense, chapters of a generation not wholly lost to itself, nor yet completely found in a revolution which it feels will make this restless and aching land actually identical with lives that could best dignify it. The health in physicality, illness in waste and frustration, the possible sweetness in enjoyment of natural earth, are solid documents here, sadder somehow than one would wish. Their energy is constant but not exuberant. It is almost as if too great a toll had been exacted to get these poems down to print. But the desperation is that of a young man, his irresponsibilities withered from him, and not yet entirely certain as to his subsequent techniques of verse or of life in which, though, he has no choice but to proceed.

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN.

Books in Brief

One Hell of a Business, by H. C. Engelbrecht. New York: Robert M. McBride and Company. 95 pages. $1.

THIS LITTLE book classifies and interprets the sensational evidence uncovered by the Senate committee investigating munitions manufacture and sale. It is the story of the promotion of slaughter by bribery, of worthless bond issues, governments as partners of arms makers and national-defense units as salesmen for private industries. The author deals with international traffic, the only angle covered by the investigation so far. Because governments already are so closely allied with armament men, he believes nationalization of arms would not ensure peace. The profits of war would be imperialistic and thus remain capitalistic. He holds all gain—to business and to government alike—must be eliminated before the friends and beneficiaries of war will surrender. This seems a hopelessly high ideal; but with enough evidence already presented to shake the world it is unbelievable that the Senate will let such a probe die in a routine report.

E. T.

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A Journey into Rabelais's France, by Albert Jay Nock. New York: William Morrow and Company. 313 pages. $3.50.

Mr. Nock made a pilgrimage through the French countryside from Chinon round to Metz, through the haunts of his favorite author (barring Artemus Ward). His book includes both travel impressions and comments of his own on various aspects of French literature and history. He describes it as "a souvenir of a good time—nothing but that." But the book is anything but that; indeed, its dominant mood is one of peevishness—I don't think there is any other word for it. Railroads, it appears, singled him out for special jolting; birds fled their habitat at his approach; ordinarily jovial populations put on surly scowls for his benefit; fleas lay in ambush for him. He retaliated for these imaginary tribulations by closing his eyes and going into a tantrum that lasted all the way down one side of France and up the other, to cease only when, with a feeling of "blessed relief," he finally crossed the border into Germany. Apparently he feels that Rabelais is to be pitied for having lived on the wrong side of the Rhine. R. G.

A Thesaurus of Slang, by Howard N. Rose. New York: The Macmillan Company. 128 pages. $1.75.

A slim chapbook of the terminology used in certain professional categories—the underworld, the theatrical world, sea-fishing, journalism, etc.—compiled for the benefit of those who write about life in categories. As such it may serve its purpose, though it is certainly not a thesaurus, being neither systematically arranged (as by ideas and with some method of cross-reference, for example) nor complete in any sense. Every section consists of a certain amount of current slang, an arbitrary scattering of ordinary working terms (see under Theatre Slang *proscenium,* under Newspaper Slang *lower case*), and much padding in the way of outmoded metaphors and whole rafts of words germane to no particular list but appearing in all—frequently with different spellings (see under Detective Slang, *the real mokoy*). New England "color," apparently, can be slapped on in fifty words, two of which are *gee* and *haw.* The best slang is in the sections of the theatre and the underworld. One can never stop delighting in the vigor and shrewd fancy of the best figures of genuine speech—such metonymies as those for policeman (a *button*), for lawyer (a *lip*), for detective (an *eye,* a *nose,* an *elbow*); such characterizations by function or effect as the terms for the electric chair (the *hot squat, old smokey*), the handy man on the set (a *grip*), explosive used in safe-cracking (the *noise*), being angry (*on the muscle*); and such Broadway elaborations as those for a suit (*set of threads*), or getting a divorce (*have it curdled, have it melted, have the seal shattered*), etc. When these popular images are bad they are very bad and pass away: when they are good, they are so much better than most poets that even imperfect glossaries like the present are exciting reading. O. F.

Current Economic Policies. Edited by Joseph B. Hubbard and a Committee of Harvard Professors. New York: Henry Holt and Company. 700 pages. $3.50.

In compiling this handy collection the editors have saved students the tedious job of wading through official publications and scholarly journals to obtain the main facts and representative opinions about the various Roosevelt policies. Although no Marxist critics have been included, the book is otherwise free of bias. An article by George F. Warren advocating monetary experiment, for example, is followed

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by one by the French banker Charles Rist, representing the opinions of the gold bloc. On planning, R. G. Tugwell balances B. M. Anderson of the Chase National Bank. The section on labor policy, perhaps the best, is taken almost wholly from a forthcoming book by Professor Slichter. The editors have also unearthed an instructive article by an anonymous Australian economist reviewing the policies as a whole. But in general they lack definite aim and a well coördinated plan of execution; and their book, from any ideal point of view, has the great defect of being a patchwork. Even in its defect, however, there is some virtue: the editors are, after all, compiling a book on the New (double-shuffle) Deal. J. D. N.

The Wolves, by Guy Mazeline. Translated from the French by Eric Sutton. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

Mazeline's proud and sinister wolves are completely ruled by that pseudo-Balzac psychology which detectives and attorneys consider the best explanation of human nature. That is to say, they are motivated only by greed and passion—"passion" being a stormy, mysterious thing that is invoked whenever greed is too implausible. No wonder such characters leave us cold. This novel, evolving around the conflict between a consistently strong mother and a consistently weak son, is consistently tiresome throughout the entire length of its 775 pages. The fact that it was awarded the Goncourt Prize once more illustrates the unreliability of literary awards as indications of literary value. Everybody knows this, and yet there are good young French novelists—René Trintzius, Eugène Dabit, Henriette Valet and others—who still await an intelligent American publisher, probably because they never had the dubious honor of being crowned by an academy. N. G.

Contributors

ABRAHAM EPSTEIN, author of "Insecurity: A Challenge to America" and other books on social insurance, is executive secretary of the American Association for Social Security, Inc.

HODDING CARTER, editor and publisher of The Daily Courier of Hammond, Louisiana, has covered Huey Long for the Associated and United Press for two campaigns.

JESSE STUART, a native of the Kentucky mountains, is the author of "Man with a Bull-Tongue Plow," a volume of seven hundred sonnets published last month by E. P. Dutton and Company.

HILDEGARDE FLANNER, a resident of California, lectures on poetry in California and Mexico. She is the author of "Time's Profile," a book of verse.

PAUL ROSENFELD is the author, among other books, of "Musical Chronicle," "Port of New York" and "Men Seen."

CONSTANCE ROURKE is the author of "Trumpets of Jubilee," "Troupers of the Gold Coast," "American Humor," a study of popular forces in American literature, and "Davy Crockett," a biography published last spring.

ELEANOR CLARK, a recent graduate of Vassar, where she edited The Housatonic Magazine, is now working on a novel.

GRACE ADAMS is the author of "Psychology: Science or Superstition" and "Your Child Is Normal."

KENNETH BURKE'S essays, "On Interpretation," "The Basis of Simplification" and "Perspective by Incongruity," are to be published in December in The New Republic's Dollar Series, under the title "Treatise on Communication."

LINCOLN KIRSTEIN, author of a novel, "Flesh Is Heir," was an editor of Hound and Horn.

The initials signed to the brief reviews are those of Edwin Tribble, Ramon Guthrie, Otis Ferguson, John De Witt Norton and Norbert Guterman.

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